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PRIVATE EYE

BLAIR'S FRESH START

INSIDE: 50 GLORIOUS SMEARS!

Gnome

ALL who took part in or witnessed the Jubilee celebrations will wish to pay tribute to the one person who made this such a unique and memorable occasion.

This country is indeed fortunate to have at its helm a figure who inspires respect from across the whole spectrum of the community.

I know that every man, woman and child in this great country of ours will join together in one gigantic loyal toast to the symbol of duty, constancy and success that has made this country in the last week the envy of the entire globe.

My Lords, Ladies and Gentlemen, I give you myself!

E. Strobes
pp Lord Gnome
Sterling House
Jubilee Road
Neasden

"We found these under your mattress and we're worried you're getting into politics!"

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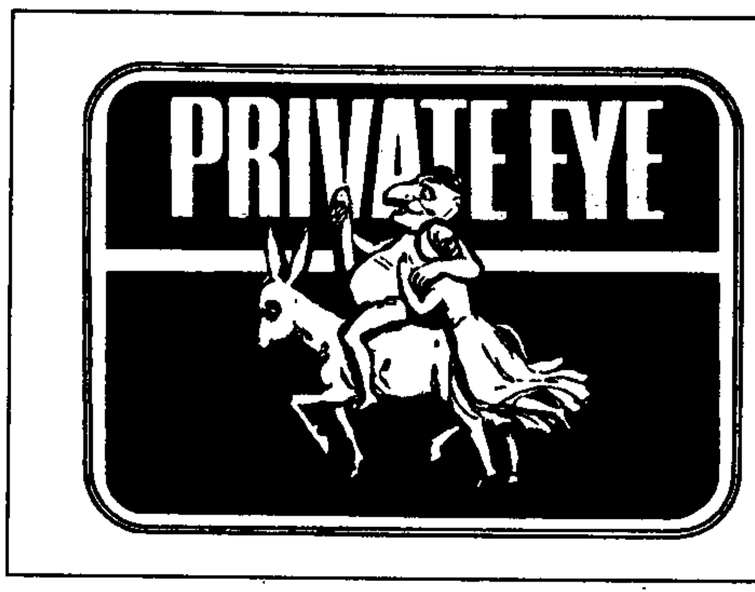


OVERLOOKED in the row over Labour's hounding of the Paddington crash rail safety campaigners was the question of how many Tories Labour is itself putting in charge of our trains.

Just a week after Stephen Byers' special adviser Dan Corry sent his "Basically, are they Tories?" email about the Paddington campaigners, one Ceri Evans was appointed media director of the strategic rail authority (SRA). Evans of course was campaign organiser for the Tories' London mayoral candidate, Steven Norris.

Evans, who runs a lobbying firm and recently defected to Labour, was greeted warmly by SRA boss Richard Bowker. He said: "I am delighted to welcome Ceri to the SRA, where he will lead the drive to get across the positive messages that are often overlooked by some commentators."

One positive message Ceri could push is the fact that his old Tory boss Norris is on the board of Jarvis, the firm responsible for track maintenance at Potters Bar and appointed by the SRA as safety adviser to Network Rail, Railtrack's replacement.

THOUGH the BBC said Dan Corry was "well-regarded at Westminster as an honest operator not inclined to dabble in spin", when the *Eye* asked him about Labour's links with Enron he seemed forgetful.

Enron boss Ralph Hodge had told the *Mail* about his dealings with Labour ministers, in particular Peter Mandelson, noting how Mandy was accompanied by "a young man who was his special adviser".

One of Mandy's special advisers, Benjamin Wegg-Prosser, told the *Eye* it must have been Corry, then also a Mandelson adviser, who attended the Enron meeting. Corry said he couldn't remember the specific meeting, but accepted he had probably attended. He also said he was generally present at the gala dinners Enron attended, but he "hadn't got a clue" if he had spent time with Enron executives at them. He also "had no idea" if Mandelson or other ministers spent time with Enron staff, as the dinners were "funny events". Ministers "rushed in and out of the dinners between other meetings rather than spent time at them".

LOYAL Blairite cheerleaders such as Julia Drown MP have been striving valiantly to discredit Professor Allyson Pollock, the leading academic critic of the private finance initiative (PFI), who argues that the government's case for PFI depends on a "value-for-money" assessment which is grotesquely skewed in favour of private finance. Drown even managed to insert a few paragraphs into a recent report from the health select committee loftily asserting that Prof Pollock's claims are "not backed up by evidence" (see last *Eye*).

Now Julia Drown and her patrons in No 10 have a new monster to slay. One Jeremy Colman told the *Financial Times* last Wednesday that government departments and local authorities are relying too much on "spurious" figures when concocting the "public-sector comparators" which supposedly prove that PFI offers value for money. Some are "pseudo-scientific mumbo-jumbo", others are "utter rubbish" and are reworked so late in the deal that the public-sector comparator ceases to represent a realistic alternative.

"There is scope to manipulate the figures," he explained. "People have to prove value for money to get a PFI deal. But because that is wrongly seen to be demonstrated only by the public-sector comparator, it becomes everything. If the answer comes out wrong, you don't get your project. So the answer doesn't come out wrong very often."

This seems to bear out what Prof Pollock has been saying. But it may be difficult for the "new" Labour clones to smear Jeremy Colman as another flakey, politically-motivated ignoramus who doesn't understand the arcane mysteries of Whitehall finance. He is deputy controller and auditor general at the government's very own national audit office!

WHO can government ministers turn to for advice as they ponder whether to license the export of BAE Systems Hawk war planes to India, currently locked in a potentially lethal stand-off with Pakistan?

Responsibility for licensing such exports is shared by the department of trade and industry (DTI) and foreign office; and last month DTI secretary Patricia Hewitt announced the creation of a new "innovation and growth team" for the aerospace industry.

The team is led by Sir Richard Evans and its purpose, says the DTI, is to "secure agreement between government and the industry on a shared vision and strategy".

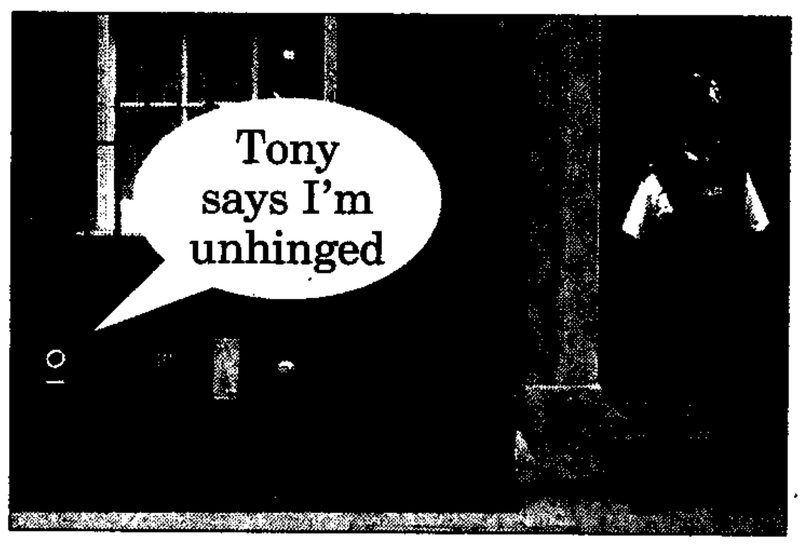
And what is top of Evans's agenda? As chairman of BAE Systems, presumably it is to convince the government to share his vision and strategy – and give him permission to flog his warplanes to India.

WHAT do these celebs have in common: Paul McCartney, Brian May, Cliff Richard, Emma Bunton, Shirley Bassey, Phil Collins, Brian Wilson?

The obvious answer is that they all performed in Brenda's "Party at the Palace" extravaganza. The less obvious answer is that, like many others who were chosen to appear in the concert, they are all artists from the EMI stable.

There is no prize for guessing the name of the record company that is about to release a CD of the gig, which is expected to be "the best-selling compilation of all time". But Brenda may be unamused to learn that, for the benefit of non-royalists, the Sex Pistols' "God Save the Queen" has also just been re-released... by EMI.

NEW SMEAR CAMPAIGN



Court Circular

ALL THE Queen's flunkeys are in a spin following the resounding success of Brenda's jubilee jamboree. So great is the shock at Buck House that a review meeting scheduled for the week of the jubilee holiday has been postponed for a month to give everyone a chance to catch their breath and recover a sense of perspective.

The golden jubilee, written off by doom-mongers early in the year, has seen winners and losers at Buckingham Palace. Simon Walker, Brenda's hapless chief spinner, has seen his stock rise as his dogged insistence that the royals' best asset is Brenda being herself finally paid off (*Eye* 1019). Walker even got the plum spot on Radio 4's jubilee *Today* over press secretary Penny Russell Smith, whose more cautious line saw her lose ground in the palace hierarchy.

Lord Levene, who resigned as head of jubilee events because he resented being asked to raise money for the celebrations by Tessa Jowell, lost badly. Lord Sterling, who took over, raised dosh and saw the event through, won the laurels. Sir Robin Janvrin, Brenda's private secretary, and lord chamberlain Lord Luce were always confident of success, as was Sir Michael Peat, keeper of the privy purse.

Peat, 52, soon to become the Prince of Wales's private secretary, has worked hard to bring Brenda and Charles closer together, as well as bringing Camilla in from the cold (*Eye* 1055). He engineered the sections of Brenda's and Charles's main jubilee speeches in which each praised the other. But his grand project of getting Camilla on to the palace balcony (*Eye* 1055) was aborted on his own initiative.

The media's positive response to seeing Camilla in the royal box for the palace concerts, orchestrated by Peat, pleased him enormously. But as the events of the jubilee weekend unfolded, he realised that doing anything to overshadow the increasingly popular Brenda would be wrong in the long run, so Camilla didn't even make it back to the palace after the St Paul's service.

Peat's latest big idea is to concentrate on turning the golden jubilee into a golden decade for the monarchy, right up to the diamond jubilee celebrations of 2012, when Brenda will be 86 and Charles 63. He confidently expects Charles and Camilla to be married by then; and by running the operation from Charles's office he hopes to demonstrate a more harmonious relationship between monarch and heir than has been evident in recent years.

'Flunkey'

NEWS

THE suspension six months ago of the chief executive of the Children and Family Court Advisory and Support Service (Cafcass) has brought no relief to the troubled organisation which professes to deliver "a high quality caring service for vulnerable children" (see *Eyes passim*).

There is a mounting backlog of cases where children at risk are not being allocated a guardian to give them independent court representation as skilled staff flee the service and the self-employed guardians fail to sign-up to Cafcass's lower salary scales or fees.

The situation is so serious in some parts of the country that desperate solicitors are advertising for self-employed guardians on the web. One such recent advert read: "London solicitor urgently seeks a children's guardian for two children. There have been several hearings and the next one is tomorrow at 10.30am. Please telephone... if you can help!" (The *Eye* understands a guardian did respond.)

Carcass's latest wheeze to overcome recruitment problems is to lower entry requirements for new staff. But the potential for harm caused by ill-trained or inexperienced staff could be as bad as delay in finding an experienced guardian.

Eye readers will recall that the service, which combines the work of guardians, court welfare officers and the children's branch of the official solicitor's department, was rushed into being by lord chancellor Lord Irvine in April last year without adequate resources or preparation and was beset by problems.

Six months ago Irvine admitted to the home affairs select committee there had been "management problems" within Cafcass, but he assured MPs he was now personally "very much on the case". But last March a senior high court family judge complained the service was still under-resourced and failing children. Three months on it's the same story. Who will m'Lord blame this time?

ABB CLARIFICATION

IN *Eye* 1052 we noted that US defence secretary Donald Rumsfeld was on the board of the Swedish-Swiss engineering company ABB when it signed contracts to deliver equipment and services for two nuclear power stations in North Korea – a country identified in George W. Bush's notorious "axis of evil" speech.

We suggested that Rumsfield resigned as a director soon after ABB signed the contract. In fact, ABB announced the North Korean venture in January 2000. In May 2000 ABB's nuclear division was taken over by Westinghouse Electric Company (which is owned by BNFL). And Rumsfeld resigned in February 2001. Apologies for the confusion.

Street Of Shame

ALTHOUGH the *Financial Times* never hesitates to advise its high-powered readers on how to run their businesses more efficiently, it seems curiously unable to apply these lessons to its own operations.

On the one hand it is seeking to contain costs by freezing recruitment and forcing more experienced staff into early retirement; on the other, it is trying to keep ambitious young hacks from jumping ship by promoting them beyond their abilities. The result is an alarming decline in both morale and expertise.

No section is more distraught than the foreign desk, once the flagship of the paper. One of the first moves by the *FT*'s new editor, Andrew "Tubby" Gowers, was to announce that the post of foreign editor had been abolished. Next step was to appoint as foreign news editor Edward Carr – a bright young man, but whose foreign reporting experience is limited to a stint in Paris for the *Economist*. And now welcome Brian Groom, the new Europe editor – another perfectly capable hack, but one whose foreign experience is nil, matching his familiarity with languages.

The main cuts have come under the guise of an early-retirement package offered last October to greybeards over the age of 55. Some took the money – around £100,000 plus three months' salary plus pension – and ran, unable to believe their luck. Chief leader-writer Max Wilkinson, for example, was due to retire in June this year anyway, but was happy to pocket an extra £100,000 for calling it a day just six months earlier than scheduled.

Others, however, have taken the money and then run back for more, resurfacing at the *FT* on lucrative "consultancies" after a three-month absence to satisfy the taxman. Their presence is required because Tubby Gowers's upheaval has jeopardised the tradition of regional specialists who know their patch, something on which the paper has always prided itself.

David Gardener, the former Middle East editor currently on a year-long sabbatical, is being lined up by Tubby for the job of Africa editor; but he has never worked in sub-Saharan Africa, so an urgent summons has gone out to Michael Holman, the long-serving Africa editor who recently accepted an early-retirement cheque, inviting him to return as a consultant.

Alas, it seems the stock market is none too impressed by the *FT*'s remarkable business nous. In early 2001 the share price of Pearson, the paper's owner, stood at £25. Today it is just over £8.

IT SEEMS that nothing short of UN intervention can halt the "porn wars" between Richard Desmond and his former smut-wallah Deric Botham, who are fighting for the right to supply the British public with its monthly dose of nude housewives, Asian babes and prancing pensioners.

As part of the legal action brought by Desmond's Northern & Shell company against Botham for having the impudence to set up a rival top-shelf company, Dirty Des's chief henchman Martin "Rottweiler" Ellice recently signed a legal document accusing Botham of stealing not only a "confidential database" (see recent *Eyes*) but also N&S's publishing software master discs.

Tragedy! How on earth was poor Desmond able to publish anything over the last six months?

Also attached to the document was, at long last, the contents of so called database which Botham allegedly purloined. It listed, er, Deric Botham himself, as well as numbers for the *Sun* newspaper, Stringfellows night club, BBC Pebble Mill press office and Garry Bushell's secretary. Also included were phone numbers for the *Express* switchboard and the British Board of Film Classification. All most confidential – except for anyone with access to directory inquiries.

Botham's lawyers reacted by demanding that an independent computer expert be sent to Northern & Shell to check that the database hadn't been hastily cobbled together after the event. Lo and behold, two days before a directions hearing in the high court on 27 May the Rottweiler suddenly decided to submit a revised statement to the court and retract his original allegations, claiming that "upon reflection he might have made a mistake".

A mistake, eh? Lest we forget, it is only a few months since a high court judge branded Ellice a liar during another case. "The statement I have quoted is false and Mr Ellice knew it was," the judge said, delivering his verdict in the legal tussle between Dirty Des and Conrad Black over West Ferry printers. "I do not have sufficient confidence in Mr Ellice's recollection or veracity to place reliance on his uncorroborated evidence."

WHEN THE journalist Victoria Coren was asked by the *Erotic Review* to survey the world of pornographic films, she set about watching a series of blue videos – and saw an opening.

Sunday Telegraph

JUBILEE coverage was generally positive throughout the British Isles, especially in the patriotic Richard Desmond titles.

But there was a curious breach in royal fervour in one of three editions of the *Daily Star* produced by a joint venture called Independent Express plc, owned 50-50 by Desmond and the increasingly fat tycoon Tony O'Reilly.

Each night separate red-top editions of the *Star* roll off the same press in Dublin for the Irish Republic and the whole of Northern Ireland. But a final green-coloured Irish *Star* is also produced exclusively for distribution in Ulster, and specifically those parts of the province where Gerry Adams is regarded as normal.

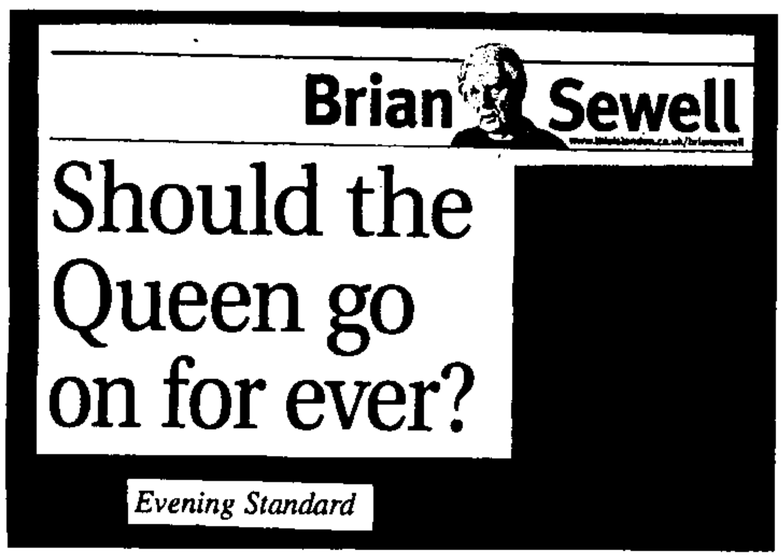
While both red-topped Stars provided upbeat coverage of the jubilee, the green version went berserk. Ignoring the body parts of at least three Corrs in the background, the paper printed a picture of the Queen captioned: "Just a leech: Queen has been sucking people dry."

Under the heading *Why is anyone celebrating?,* the *Star* pondered "why millions of people should be celebrating the fact that they have been ripped off for years by a family of parasites". Surely this is a bit hypocritical coming from the man the Queen herself knighted, *Sir* Tony O'Reilly, and the man Blair will probably insist she honours next, *Sir* Dirty of Desmond?

A SHOCK-HORROR story in last Wednesday's *Guardian* revealed that Film Four, the C4 film production company, was to be "significantly scaled back" after losing more than £5m last year on "risky big-budget ventures", notably the crime-caper *Lucky Break*.

The failure of *Lucky Break* to live up to its name financially is no great surprise: most reviewers agreed it was a mediocre mish-mash of stereotypes taken from old Ealing comedies and *Porridge*. But *Grauniad* hacks Matt Wells and Angelique Chrysafis laid the blame solely on the marketing campaign, for "making the film look like a slapstick comedy instead of an intelligent satire".

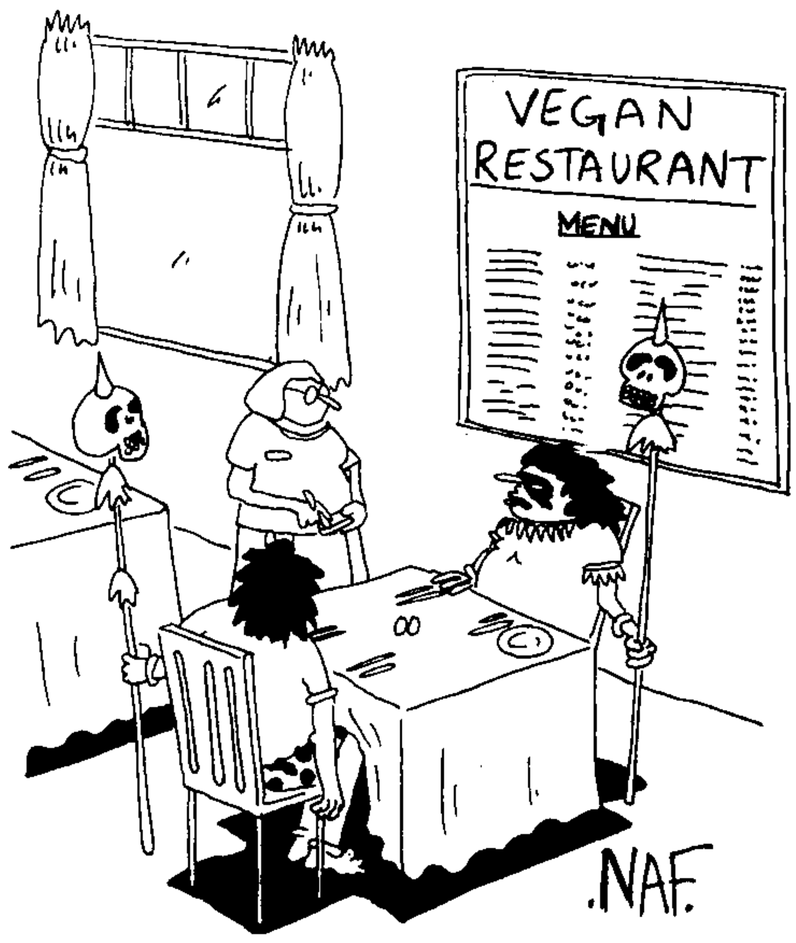
So that's all right then: clearly the production itself couldn't be faulted. Which is just as well, since the screenwriter of this allegedly intelligent satire was Ronan Bennett – who happens to be married to Georgina Henry, deputy editor of the *Grauniad*.



JUST FANCY THAT!

Friday 7 June: As the nation prepares to watch the big match from Sapporo, an editorial in the *Daily Telegraph* mocks the excitable folk of Argentina for inflating the importance of football. How different from the phlegmatic English, who treat triumph and disaster just the same! "How comforting it is to live in a country where Bill Shankly's old line – 'Some people think football is a matter of life and death... I can assure them it is much more important than that' – is still open to question."

Saturday 8 June: Below the splash headline "England 1, Argentina 0", almost the entire front page of the *Telegraph* is cleared for a rapturous account of England's historic win. Inside, opposite an editorial drooling over David Beckham, much of the op-ed page is filled with similar hyperbole, including a breathless screed from Tom Utley claiming that "Football is a science, it's an art, it is war, ballet, drama, terror and joy rolled into one." But not life and death, presumably.



"Two vegans please"

CLICHEWATCH: THUMBS DOWN

CHARLES CLARKE was widely tipped to take over Stephen Byers's job in the recent reshuffle. As Marie Woolf reported in the *Independent* on 29 May, "Clarke... is favoured by many who believe he will be a 'safe pair of hands' and able to promote transport policy to the public."

But Alistair Darling got the job instead. As the *Daily Mail* explained the following day: "Mr Darling has earned a reputation for having the safest pair of hands in an accident-prone Cabinet". *The Mirror* also noted that Darling "is known as a safe pair of hands" – as did the *FT, Express, Times, Guardian* and many others.

Darling was not alone. Michael White reported in the *Guardian* that "a famously safe pair of hands, Andrew Smith, is moving from being Gordon Brown's deputy to Mr Darling's old post at work and pensions". And Andrew Smith's old job at the treasury went to Paul Boateng – who, according to the Indie, "was viewed as a safe pair of hands who could handle the cut and thrust of the dispatch box and the minutiae of a complex brief."

Even the *News of the World* found space to mention Darling's deputy, John Spellar, "who'll need to provide more than his traditional 'safe pair of hands' to succeed". Meanwhile, Martin Ivens of the *Sunday Times* revealed that Charles Clarke failed to get Byers's job because he might have precipitated an unwinnable war with Gordon Brown: "The same applies to another Blairite 'safe pair of hands' in John Reid, the Northern Ireland secretary..."

O brave new cabinet, that has so few butterfingers in it! But Messrs Darling, Smith, Spellar, Boateng, Clarke and Reid shouldn't rejoice too soon at their accolade. Back in December 1998, Peter Mandelson was replaced at the DTI by a man described in the *Evening Standard* as "one of New Labour's rising stars... personable and intelligent... a safe pair of hands". It was, er, Stephen Byers!

THE betting magazine *Sports Adviser* was bang on the money with some of its expert predictions for the England-Argentina clash, published on the Friday of the match.

As Brian McManus put it: "With only the workman-like Nicky Butt and Trevor Sinclair waiting in the wings there's very little hope for the national side... They have no chance of beating Argentina. If they do manage to conjure up a draw, it will be nothing short of a miracle."

Terry Norman was equally prescient. "Patience is a key component for the Argentineans and once the breakthrough is made, expect a number to follow," he wrote. "I have tried to find a reason why England can win this game... I failed."

ROYAL FACTWATCH: THE GRAUNIAD

UNLIKE the *Telegraph* and *Times*, the *Guardian* has no Court & Social page. And, as befits a liberal republican newspaper, it has no royal correspondent. But despite its best efforts, royal stories keep intruding into the news, causing headaches galore for its poor "Corrections and Clarifications" editor.

In **February**, the paper managed to misdate of the Queen's "annus horribilis" speech and give the wrong birthday for the Queen Mother. In **March**, a feature aptly headlined "It's a Royal Cock-Up" claimed that Edward VIII abdicated in 1938. An obituary of the Queen Mother in **April** claimed incorrectly that her husband was the first prince of the royal blood since Richard II to become engaged to a commoner. To show that this studied ignorance extends to mere toffs as well as royals, an obituary of Lord Kimberley in **May** said that a baronetcy had been awarded "in 1611 to an ancestor who did well at Agincourt" – no mean feat, given that Agincourt was in 1415.

And so to the jubilee coverage, which began on **31 May** with a feature suggesting what should be done when the Queen celebrates "her ruby jubilee". Alas! As the paper noted few days later, this "was misplaced, since it happened 10 years ago. We meant to refer to the diamond jubilee, still (nearly) 10 years away".

On **1 June** the *Grauniad* triumphantly named several "notable republicans", including the astronomer-royal Sir Martin Rees. Alas again! Yet another correction had to be published, confessing that "the description does not fit in his case. He is not a republican".

On **4 June**, rock critic Adam Sweeting described the royal pop concert, at which Paul McCartney sang "All You Need is Love": "What a shame Sir Paul didn't throw in a rendition of 'Her Majesty' at the jubilee bash – 'I want to tell her that I love her a lot but I gotta get a bellyful of wine/Her Majesty's a pretty nice girl/Some day I'm gonna make her mine'. Perhaps he didn't want to lose his knighthood." Two days later the paper admitted that McCartney did indeed sing the song. It offered the feeble excuse that Sweeting's piece, which purported to be a review of the concert at the palace, was merely "anticipating" the gig.

As the long jubilee weekend came to a close, there was time for one more royal cock-up. A correction on **6 June** noted that "the Queen and Prince Philip travelled up the Mall on Tuesday standing in a Range Rover, not a Bentley as we said ('Street Cred that Won Over 1m people', page 1, yesterday). They had arrived at Admiralty Arch in a Bentley before switching vehicles for the remaining part of the journey to Buckingham Palace." And what was the excuse this time? "The error was caused by a partial view of the event impeded by the large number of people attending."

How exceedingly inconsiderate of them! As an editorial on **5 June** observed, rather sulkily: "This golden jubilee may in future come to be seen as a fool's paradise." So there.

"Miss Timpson, I love you – will you be my PA?"

LABOUR DONOR SPECIAL

IN THE last *Eye* we examined the role of property dealer John Ritblat, chairman of British Land, in a scheme to buy Britain's tax and customs offices through companies which – a nice touch, this – were themselves based in the offshore tax havens of Bermuda and the British Virgin Islands.

At the same time we reported that in 1999 Mr Ritblat had given £100,000 to the Labour party. A spokesman for Mr Ritblat then phoned to say he had not given £100,000 – or any other sum – to Labour and politely asked for a correction. He has that correction at once. But how did the mistake occur? Like many others, we believed what we had read in the *Sunday Telegraph*.

In April 1999 Labour managers became seriously worried at the flood of new members who were leaving the party, taking their subscriptions with them. They also became obsessed by the handful of very rich people whose loyalty to Labour seemed secure and who were also easily seduced by gala dinners arranged in their honour at which they could break bread with ministers. One such dinner, at £500 a plate, was held at the Hilton hotel on 15 April 1999.

According to a document leaked some months later to the *Sunday Telegraph*, the dinner was so successful that the next morning 11 supporters pledged £3m in donations to the party. The names were listed in the document, entitled Gift Detail Report – High Value Donations, and included Derek Johnson, chairman of JSA shipping agents, who confirmed he had pledged £100,000; William Haughey, a Scottish businessman who said he had given more than the £10,000 recorded; Sir Maurice Hatter, an electronics tycoon who denied pledging £100,000; Lord Gavron, a publisher and chairman of the *Guardian* who was listed as giving £500,000 in the month before he became a life peer; David Goldman, chairman of BATM, who denied he had given £1m recorded in the list; and, among others, Mr Ritblat, who was not quoted.

Mr Ritblat's name and £100,000 pledge duly appeared on the many websites that record Labour party donors; but a week later the *Sunday Telegraph* published a tiny two paragraph letter from Mr Ritblat. "I have been abroad," he wrote, "and have had the Sunday Telegraph wish list read to me. I have never made a pledge to the Labour Party but have twice been canvassed to do so."

Did Labour fundraisers, headed by pop music tycoon Lord (Michael) Levy, compile a "wish list" of rich people who had been canvassed to make contributions, some of whom had not done so – and was this the list leaked to the *Sunday Telegraph*? Such a suggestion seems most unlikely, even for the Labour Party; but the leak certainly caused apprehension at the highest level. Not only Lord Levy but even Tony Blair felt obliged to write in the most grovelling terms to John Ritblat apologising for the leak.

IT IS a month since we learned that Richard Desmond donated £100,000 to the Labour party just as the government decided not to refer his purchase of Express Newspapers to the competition commission. And with each passing week the official explanations look ever more threadbare.

The story broke on 12 May. Stephen Byers – the DTI minister at the time of the takeover – went on television that morning to insist that the decision on whether Dirty Des was a fit and proper person to own national newspapers hadn't been up to him: he had simply followed the recommendation of the office of fair trading (OFT). "I fell in line with that advice," he told David Frost. "If I hadn't done that, there would have been a real scandal."

In a radio interview later that day he added that "it would be valuable if in fact this [OFT] report could be published so that everybody could clearly see what the advice was I received on which I acted. If it was published I think people could see I simply followed advice I was given."

Whoops! The OFT report was duly released on 27 May. Although it concluded that there was no reason to refer Dirty Des's deal on "competition grounds", since he owned no other newspapers, it added that the OFT had received 23 representations from individuals and groups who thought Desmond's takeover should be stopped on "public-interest" grounds (as happened when porn magnate David Sullivan tried to buy two newspapers in Bristol). Pointing out that it was unable to assess non-competition issues – such as whether Desmond was a fit and proper person to own national papers – the OFT passed the buck back to Byers, who waved the deal through.

Having had their first alibi exposed as a sham, Byers and the No 10 spin-doctors then came up with a new version: the DTI had asked the home office whether Des's porn interests might make him an unsuitable proprietor, but had been assured that there was no problem. Once again, in other words, Byers was merely acting on official advice.

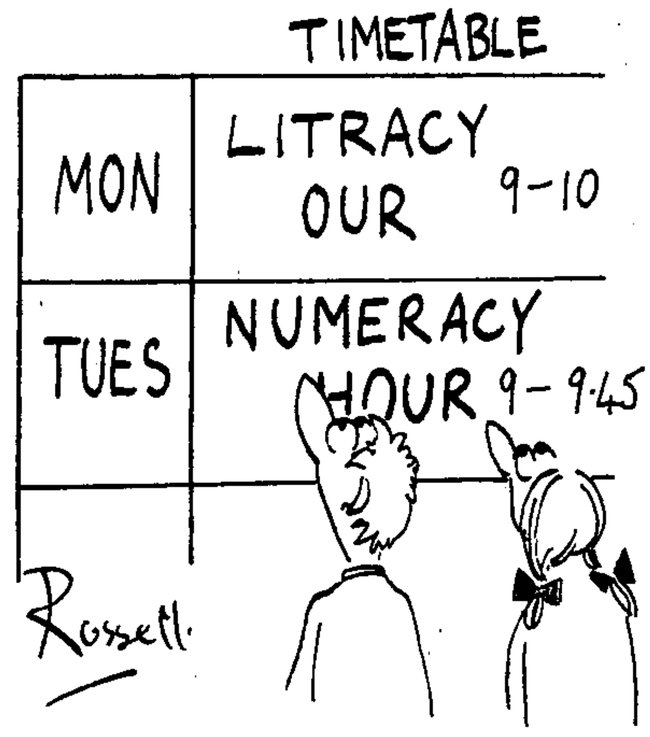
But last weekend's *Sunday Telegraph* shot a hole in this version by revealing that although the home office flicked through *Asian Babes* and *Readers' Wives*, it didn't investigate the most controversial and hardcore part of his output – the live Fantasy121 website. Why not? Because the DTI didn't request it.

Spin doctors are now hastily concocting a new excuse: that no one knew about the website. This is even more absurd than their previous efforts. Before the OFT had even started writing its report, on 22 December 2000 the *Guardian* carried a front-page story revealing the extent of Desmond's online operations, "including webcams selling live sex".

Robin Corbett MP, chairman of the home affairs committee, promptly declared that this proved Desmond's unfitness to run national newspapers: "I hope this will be referred to the competition commission and it finds against him." And on 17 January 2001 *Grauniad* hack Francis Wheen devoted his column to a lurid description of Fantasy121.com, again prompting loud protests from MPs.

Yet we are now asked to believe that on 7 February 2001, when Byers approved the takeover, neither he nor any else at the DTI was aware of Dirty Des's notorious website. As Chris McCafferty MP said last weekend: "It takes my breath away."

"It's a lovely area – no teachers or nurses can afford to live here"



THE government's embarrassment over the Bernie Ecclestone affair was widely documented, but its involvement with another major player in the UK motor-racing industry has attracted far less comment.

So concerned was the prime minister that the Grand Prix would be taken away from Britain because of problems that have plagued Silverstone racing circuit in recent years, that late last year he personally telephoned Max Moseley, the president of the FIA (Federation Internationale de l'Automobile). While this gesture could be seen as purely patriotic, it is interesting to note the links between "new" Labour and Octagon, the company which holds the rights to run Silverstone for the next 15 years.

Octagon Motorsports, formerly Brands Hatch Leisure Group, has been a subsidiary of the US marketing giant Interpublic since November 1999. Last September the company was investigated by the DTI's competition commission over its acquisition of the assets of the British Racing Drivers Club (BRDC), which owns Silverstone. In 1999 Octagon, which then owned Brands Hatch and three other racing circuits, signed a deal with Ecclestone's Formula One Administration (FOA) to become the promoter of the British Grand Prix.

As Brands Hatch needed to be upgraded to meet Formula One standards and planning permission could not be obtained quickly enough, Octagon reached a deal with BRDC to take over the operation of the circuit for 15 years in return for carrying out an investment programme to improve the site. There were several arguments against allowing the deal to go through, not least that it increased Octagon's share of turnover from British motor racing circuits from 28 to 72 percent as the owner of five out of 18 tracks. There were also concerns voiced within the industry that Octagon's dominance of British Motorsports Promoters, which handles the rights to run three of the major British car and bike championships, could present a possible conflict of interest. Nevertheless the commission decided that the merger was not against the public interest.

Tony Blair's willingness to help Octagon in its bid to retain the British Grand Prix is surely unrelated to his party's gratitude to the man who set up Octagon as a sports marketing company in 1997, bankrolled by Interpublic. He is Sir Frank Lowe, who is not only a Labour party donor, but also gave £2m to set up the first of "new" Labour's city academies in north-west London.

Queen of Sheba, Behind the Myth:
BBC2, 8.10pm

Northern Echo

AMONG Labour's latest corporate supporters is Health Media Ltd, a firm including former NHS managers which sells "e-services", its biggest customer being the NHS. It gave £9,400 to Labour on 2 February.

The firm told the *Eye* it made the donation when Labour hosted a dinner in the north-east at which health secretary Alan Milburn was a key speaker. The spokesman said: "NHS executives are our key target audience and Milburn is a big draw, so giving the money to Labour fitted in with our marketing plan."

Last December the company warned its investors of losses because "key contracts... will either be delayed or will not materialise". However, it had a new strategy for making money for shareholders – getting more money out of the NHS – and technology director Simon Goodchild was promoted to the board as part of this strategy.

Goodchild was formerly programme director of the NHS Information Authority and established the NHSNet website. Also among the firm's management is Peter Rogers, formerly IT director of Suffolk health authority. The firm's NHS-funded work includes the creation of the website for the NHS Modernisation Agency, and the launch of the "Living Health" digital TV channel available to Telewest subscribers in Birmingham.

When this channel was launched with £3.8m of NHS money last year as a pilot to test "the possible health applications of digital TV", junior health minister Gisela Stuart gushed that "we are at the dawn of a new revolution". The firm's last results showed losses of £1.9m on £1.2m turnover.

THE steady infiltration of Whitehall by the private sector continues thanks to the cabinet office's creation of new "management boards", all stuffed with business men and women, whose job is to help run civil service departments.

Though not all departments have responded to the initiative, trade and industry secretary Patricia Hewitt has been enthusiastic at the DTI. Last month she gave her department not one but seven new boards, claiming that the members were "drawn from business, union and academic backgrounds".

In fact 17 of the 21 appointments are from business, with only Margaret Prosser from the T&G and Tony Cooper of the civil service union Prospect representing trades unions.

Thanks to Hewitt, Alan Jones, managing director of the private mail operator TNT, so influential in the union-busting Wapping dispute in 1986, sits on the DTI's "service" board. The DTI is of course the department in charge of the post office.

Hewitt has also appointed Diane Thompson of Camelot to the DTI's "business board". As the national audit office (NAO) pointed out, Camelot effectively won the lottery licence because there was no real competition. Thanks to Camelot's business efficiency, lottery receipts are dropping and targets aren't being met, but executives are continuing to earn enormous salaries.

The DTI also oversees regulation of power utilities, so perhaps it is fitting that Nicholas Baldwin, chief executive of Powergen, will now sit on its "energy board".

At the home office, meanwhile, home secretary Jack Straw has appointed three non-executive business people to help run his department.

Joining the board is Patrick Carter, who made millions founding then selling the private health firm Westminster Healthcare. He is a friend of Straw's and has worked for the government before. He was involved in the home office's decision to hand more prisons over to private operators, and helped the department of culture review the plans for Wembley Stadium, neither of which have been terribly successful (see Eyes passim ad nauseam).

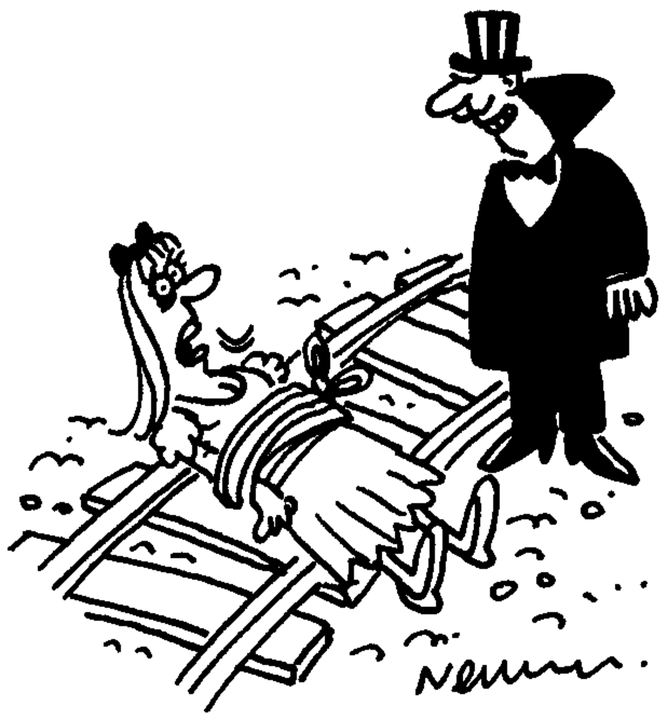
Carter is joined on the home office board by Denise Kingsmill, currently a non-executive of recruitment agency (and dome sponsor) Manpower, who also serves on the board of struggling cable firm Telewest.

THE Stephen Byers approach to telling the truth appears to have spread throughout the department of transport and the regions.

Almost two years after the strategic rail authority (SRA) awarded £6m in grants to the winners of its rail freight innovation competition – set up to find an alternative to carrying heavy loads by road – Don Foster MP tabled a parliamentary question on the progress of the contest.

Foster asked who had won, when the winning scheme was required to be operational and what progress had been made to date. Junior transport minister David Jamieson replied that the three winning schemes submitted by Blue Circle Industries, Exel and Minimodal were "all being delivered to the agreed times and specifications".

Whoops! Jamieson has been misinformed by someone at the SRA, it seems. For when the rail authority announced the winners of its freight competition in June 2000, one of the criteria of the winning projects was that they "would be deliverable within a six-month time frame". Two years on all three companies are still at the testing stage. There are concerns in particular that a "piggyback" intermodal system for transporting cement designed by Blue Circle (now Lafarge) in conjunction with Babcock Rail and Metalair Feldbinder, is too wide for parts of the British rail network. Brilliant!



"It's not the train that worries me – it's the smear campaign"

THE NEW HIGHWAYMEN

IT IS several years since the *Eye* dubbed the engineering firm W.S. Atkins as "the Tories' favourite". But time rolls on... and governments change. Now, like so many other construction firms, Atkins get on terribly well with "new" Labour.

A good example of the rapport is the amazing story of the notorious M11 link road in north London, whose cost when it was started was estimated at £153m. In 1998 the national audit office (NAO) found it had cost £340m and rising. Then, in 1999, the government disclosed the full cost: £380m. When the road was completed everyone hoped that was the end of public spending on it. Not so. In June 2000, the Highways Agency gave a new estimate – £430m, or £50m more than the road cost when it was finished!

Much of the extra costs went on "related consultancy fees" to the main engineering consultant, W.S. Atkins. By a curious agreement signed a long time ago, Atkins gets paid a percentage of all construction costs, whether or not they did any related work. In the spring of 2000, the responsibility for the M11 link road passed from the Highways Agency to Transport for London, controlled by London mayor Ken Livingstone and the Greater London Authority. One of the main responsibilities of the new body is to pay compensation to those past and present residents in north London who claim they have suffered from disruption, pollution or congestion from the building of the road. The original estimate for compensation was £16m, but the figure is now believed to be much higher.

Transport for London has come up with an exciting name for the firm to handle the compensation claims: W.S. Atkins. So the firm that benefited so much from the ever-increasing costs of building the road will now be the "valuation agent" assessing the claims for compensation arising from it.

The *Eye* asked Transport for London if the choice of W.S. Atkins was appropriate. A spokeswoman replied: "We don't think there is a conflict of interest here. There is an appeals system in place. Anyone who is not satisfied with Atkins's valuations can appeal to an entirely independent body. So there is nothing unusual or inappropriate about this." So that's all right, then.

SCOTCH MYSTERY

ANDY ROSIE of the Scottish environment pollution agency (SEPA) recently told a meeting to protest about fish farm damage in the West Highlands that his agency only approved the use of "safe" chemicals to dose farm salmon infested with blood-sucking sea lice.

Well, apart from approving hundreds of applications to use the potentially cancer-causing organophosphate dichclorvos, that is, the dangers of which eluded SEPA.

It now seems SEPA's approval of a further 250 applications to use cypermethrin, a synthetic pyrethroid pesticide "wonder-cure" for sea lice, is also flawed. Two scientists from the Centre for Environment, Fisheries and Aqaculture Science in Lowestoft, Suffolk, certainly think so. Writing in the *Marine Pollution Bulletin* (vol 42, no 6), they claim pyrethroids are up to 1,000 times more toxic to fish than to mammals and birds; that synthetic pyerthroid insecticides (used to treat sheep scab and prevent ticks) may reduce the homing abilities of wild adult salmon; that low levels of the pesticide reduced fertilisation in wild salmon eggs; and that sub-lethal levels of cypermethrin may have a long-term impact on the reproduction of wild Atlantic salmon.

SEPA, though, is now too busy approving the latest sea lice "wonder drug", trade name *Slice*, to bother about that. It insists *Slice* is safe too. But will it make its research available? Er, no, says the Scottish executive's Toby Willison.

WELSH RABBIT

THE VULTURES are gathering now that police have sent their file on Mike German, the Liberal Democrat deputy first minister in the Welsh Assembly, to the crown prosecution service (CPS).

Despite desperate attempts by Wales's first minister Rhodri Morgan to deflect criticism of German, his partner in the coalition that allows him to govern, Inspector Dai Knacker was called in by Cllr Jeff Jones, the chairman of the Welsh Joint Education Committee (WJEC) and Labour leader of Bridgend council who opposes the coalition with the Lib Dems.

The main allegations came from WJEC's auditors about the use German had apparently made of the credit card supplied by WJEC when he worked for its European unit.

Assembly member Alan Cairns, who shadows German as economic development spokesman for the Tories, has been quick to gloat that the European anti-fraud office, OLAF, is also investigating WJEC's European unit. Separately, its investigation is looking into whether WJEC may have to pay back more than £1m in grants to which it was not entitled when German was there.

Cairns may not realise it, but he can get some first-class advice regarding problems in European funding from a fellow Tory in the Welsh assembly. He could talk to Jonathan Morgan, for example, as it has just emerged that the European Union is investigating the use of its funds in Coleg Glan Hafren in Cardiff, when Jonathan was the college's European officer. Although there is no suspicion of fraud, it seems Morgan's inadequate paper work could mean the college might have to find up to £300,000 out of its reserves to pay back grants.

'Backbiter'

TV

Match Of The Day Live: World Cup 2002 (BBC1)
World Cup 2002 (ITV1)

WHILE the television coverage of general elections has scarcely changed in living memory – it's been in the hands of Dimblebys since Thatcherism – there have been significant shifts in the reporting of that other quadrennial TV jamboree: the world cup.

Four years ago Desmond Lynam was the BBC anchorman with Jimmy Hill leading his team of pundits and ITV's chief commentator was Brian Moore. By the time this tournament began, Lynam had moved from BBC to ITV, Moore was dead and Hill had moved to the almost equal invisibility of Sky Sports, which is prevented by government viewer-access rules from showing any world cup matches at all. For all these reasons, there is a strong sense of fresh beginnings in the coverage, a feeling solidified by the fact that time differences from the Far East make this a rare example of televised football as breakfast TV.

The BBC's **Match Of The Day Live** was the pre-tournament favourite to win the ratings and reviewing battle, largely because of the presence of Gary Lineker. While most other televised sports have developed presenters who have played the game at a high level – Richie Benaud, Mark Nicholas, Peter Allis, Sue Barker – football hosting has been monopolised by fan-journalists such as Lynam.

Now, for the first time, the BBC world cup coverage was being presented by a man who had played in a semi-final of the tournament and, having scored two spot kicks against Cameroon in 1990, could actually empathise with the pressure on David Beckham as he waited to take the penalty against Argentina.

Regrettably, apart from one unique insight – that Lineker finds it more nerve-wracking watching England in the world cup than representing his country in the tournament – the anchor's past has been a disadvantage. Though now accomplished during studio discussions, the live-by-satellite interviews he conducts from London with players and coaches in Japan and South Korea are embarrassingly bland.

It's all too clear that he wishes to retain the option of playing golf with his successors in the England set-up or being invited to the next big bash at Posh and Becks's place. Lineker intriguingly revealed in his *Sunday Telegraph* column that he has been speaking to Beckham by telephone during the tournament but, infuriatingly, the duties of a friend overcome the instincts of a journalist in what he passes on to viewers. For far too long, television sport has tolerated a complicity between reporters and the reported which would never be allowed in politics and Lineker has made the problem worse.

The BBC's squad of pundits is also problematic. The tics and attitudes of Alan Hansen and Mark Lawrenson are by now too familiar and have been fatally weakened by Alistair McGowan's parodies which the BBC, in a foot-shooting manoeuvre, even screened as a world cup warm-up special.

And, while their domestic record with Liverpool makes them authoritative commentators on English football, they were very moderate international players for Scotland and Eire. Indeed, Hansen made one of the worst defensive errors in world cup football history and so it's hard to take his sneering at the current international rearguards.

At least Hansen and Lawrenson seem to get on. Elsewhere, even if the match being covered is a walk-over for one team, there's always a weird sense of tension in the BBC coverage because of the impression that so many of its pundits hate each other. Alan Hansen and Martin O'Neill are involved in some sectarian Celtic hatred dating back to the BBC's 1998 coverage; and O'Neill seems to have a bit of Irish history with David O'Leary. Peter Schmeichel and Ian Wright can't even appear on the same show because of old footballing animosity. You keep expecting them to issue Lineker with a whistle and banana and tomato-coloured cards.

To be fair, as football pundits say, the BBC has discovered a classy new commentator in Steve Wilson; but the main games go to John Motson and Barry Davies, whose characteristics – enthusiastic know-all and laid-back would-be poet – are perhaps by now too familiar.

With Lynam playing his first world cup for them and the need for a new lead commentator after Moore, ITV has been freer to innovate and **World Cup 2002** shows the benefits of such freedom. Admittedly its main find of the tournament – Paul Gascoigne as pundit – is something of an accidental boon. They can't have known how comically incomprehensible he would be: "Thez shuplay Shem in Hull" meaning "They should play Sheringham in the hole" and so on.

But the Chelsea striker Jimmy Floyd Hasselbaink has proved a shrewd new signing: unusually willing, for a serving player, to point out mistakes in games. And even the familiar elements of the programmes have impressed. Lynam, again given the space he needs by live coverage after the fiasco of the premiership, is back to his early 90s form and, during England matches, the presence of two managers who have led England in major tournaments – Terry Venables and Bobby Robson – only underlines the rather chippy nature of Hansen and Lawrenson's contributions.

With a week gone, ITV has been the Senegal of the tournament TV (un-fancied but impressive), while the BBC has been the France: an institution which has never looked as good as it should.

'Square Eyes'

MEDIA NEWS

HAVING been criticised for lack of reverence and airtime over the Queen Mother's birthday, the BBC pulled out the stops for the golden jubilee. Coverage was lavish (£10m), blanket (40 hours) and packed with self-promotional opportunities.

Peter Sissons, who shunned a black tie while reporting the Queen Mother's death, boasted about his "special jubilee tie" during the *Six O'Clock News* on 3 June before filling what was supposed to be a news programme with shameless puffs for the Beeb's royal coverage.

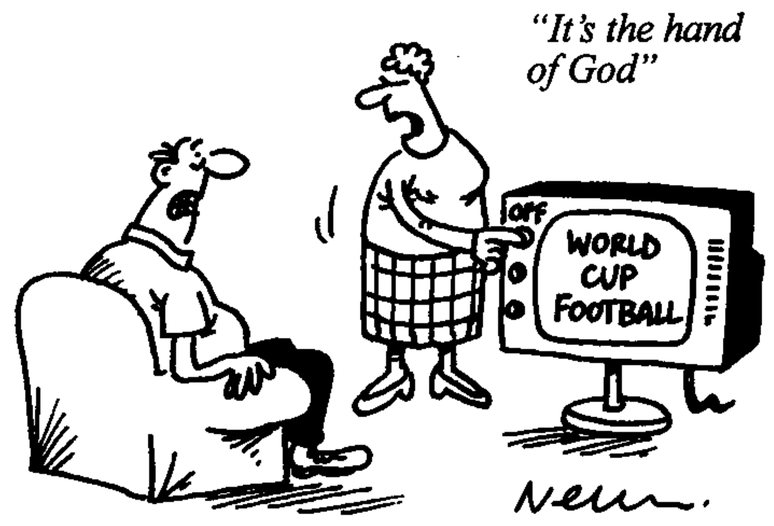
"Our coverage of the jubilee has been brilliant across all our services," announced a triumphant Greg Dyke hours after the event. The longed-for reward soon materialised. While the closing credits rolled, culture secretary Tessa Jowell was leaking important news to the *Financial Times*: privatisation of the BBC is off the agenda for the next 15 years.

THE job of the sergeant at arms, Lt Gen Sir Michael Wilcocks, is to ensure good order and military discipline in the Palace of Westminster.

So when he heard that the phone company O_2 had organised a reception for secretaries, researchers and other low life to watch the England v Argentina game in the Macmillan room at the Commons, he intervened at once.

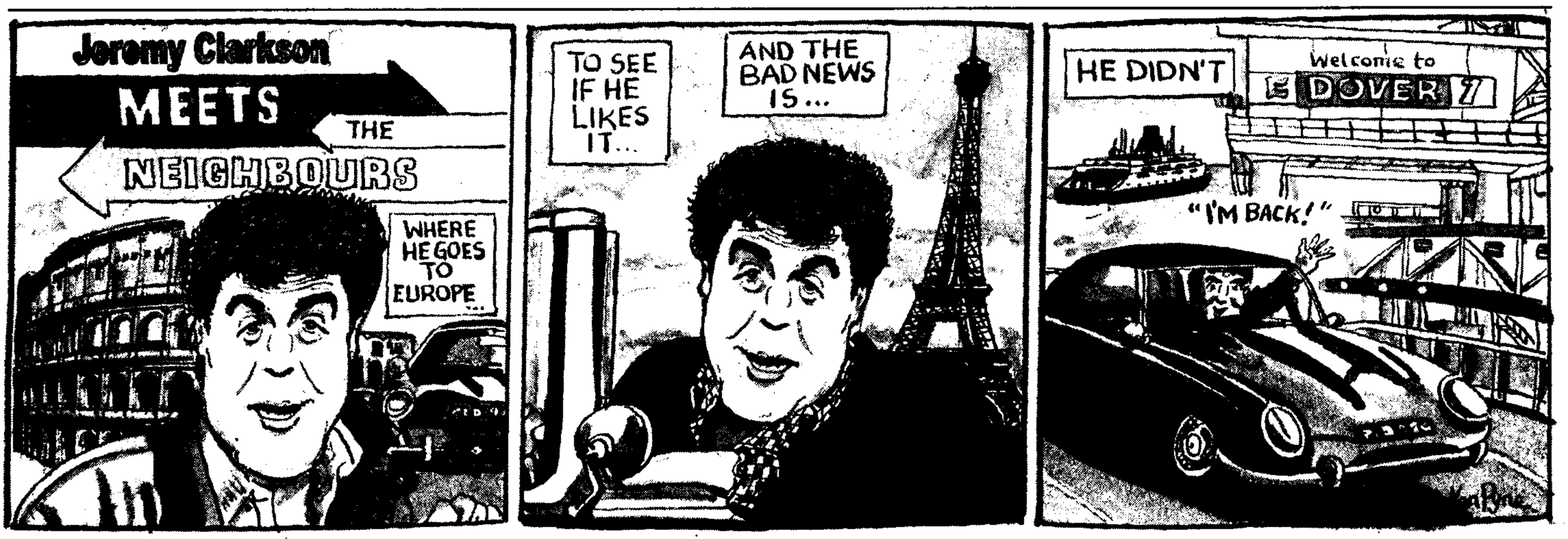
He told O_2 that even though the House was in recess the reception could not be tolerated since it was "inappropriate". So O_2 had to contact all the guests (who had had their invitations for at least two weeks) and tell them the event was off.

No such action was deemed appropriate by Sir Michael when MPs were invited by the all-party BBC Group to a reception in the terrace marquee the following Tuesday (when they were back at work) to watch the England v Nigeria match. But then MPs are not low life but very important people who can watch football without causing a disturbance.



THE BBC television "trail" for the Radio Five Live world cup commentary team features a large missile being launched to backing music taken from the Led Zeppelin track, Kashmir.

A subliminal message from Pakistani extremists… or an uncharacteristic lapse in taste?



MORE evidence of belt-tightening at ITN following its ludicrously high bid to continue its "news" contract with ITV.

On 27 May the cheap videophone technology normally used by hacks in exceptional tricky circumstances was back in action for the early evening news. No war zone this time… Instead, this shoddy pre-recorded item treated viewers to crackly audio and dodgy images from RTE's coverage of the tittle-tattle surrounding Roy Keane's exit from the world cup – all taken from the Irish broadcaster's own news service.

CHRIS BICKERTON, presenter of the BBC World Service's *Focus on Africa* for more than 30 years, died of cancer two weeks ago. His demise was reported in the world service's main news bulletin, prompting hundreds of messages of condolence from listeners all over the continent. "Chris was the rock around which *Focus* was built," an official obituary on the BBC website observes. "Some listeners even named their children after him."

What this devoted audience did not know was that early in 2001 Bickerton was told by BBC bosses his services would not be required beyond the end of the year — partly because he had reached the age of 60, and partly because managers wanted to "Africanise" the presenters. He was offered a few hundred pounds as a "goodwill gesture".

There was dismay and anger among his colleagues, who pointed out that other BBC presenters are allowed to continue beyond the age of 60 — or even 90, in Alastair Cooke's case. A petition, signed by every member of the department, urged the management to think again since "Chris is the most professional, knowledgeable and experienced presenter we have in this department". The signatories, most of whom were themselves African, also noted that "listeners want presenters who have a feel for the stories/items in the programme. Chris, with 30 years' experience, certainly has as much sensibility for the stories as most Africans on staff."

The suits agreed to postpone his departure while negotiating an improved settlement. Meanwhile, Bickerton was diagnosed with cancer of the oesophagus, though he continued to come in to work when he was well enough. That arrangement ended in December 2001. A month later he had surgery to remove the tumour, but in April he learned that the cancer had spread aggressively and was inoperable.

No leaving party was ever organised for Chris Bickerton: not so much as the carton of orange juice and packet of crisps customarily produced at the departure of someone after a few weeks' work experience. No speech was made, no gratitude expressed. Now, however, the fine words are flowing: the BBC website has dozens of tributes, and it seems that some corporate celebration of his life is to be organised. Many old colleagues think the suits should spare themselves the effort and hypocrisy, and hand over a large cheque to his widow and young son instead.

10.00 Danniella Westbrook: My Nose and Me. See Pick of the Day. (T) (9364464)

Daily Telegraph

GOING LIVE

WHEN ITN News went live to Tom Bradby for the latest on the Buckingham Palace fire on 2 June, he was looking at pictures fed by ... the BBC.

"Any indication of how the fire started?" the studio anchor asked.

"No... but they have a pretty good idea and they'll let us know in the morning," came his confident reply.

Over on BBC1, meanwhile, Nick Higham had more on the fire. "These are now live pictures or pictures that were taken earlier," he said helpfully. But as for causes: "We have no evidence as to what caused the fire."

JUST FANCY THAT!

Golden Jubilee

"Unofficial overnight figures estimate an average of 12.3 million people watched across the four-and-a-quarter hours of the live broadcast from Buckingham Palace. BBC One controller Lorraine Heggessey hailed a 'fantastic' night which celebrated the jubilee in a 'unique and special way'."

— *BBC News Online*, 4 June 2002.

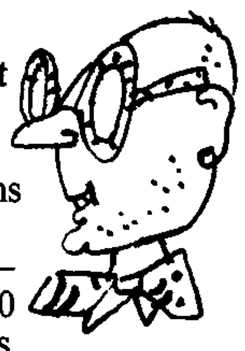
Edward & Sophie's wedding

"The low-key nature of the Royal Wedding has been reflected in the TV ratings with fewer than 14 million people watching the ceremony."

— *BBC News Online*, 21 June 1999.

AD NAUSEAM

BARCLAYS adverts are back… but this time they're not "big" – they're clever.



Last year the bank was widely slated for spending millions getting high-profile actors to tell everyone how big Barclays were – while at the same time closing 200 rural branches to make themselves less big. The new campaign retains the service of film stars but ditches the "big" idea. What replaces it remains unclear.

Actor Samuel L. Jackson is the plat du jour, delivering a monologue about a pig going to market, where he is molested by a bear, having met a matador. Great story, but little solace for the customers who just want their local bank back.

For the rest of us, Barclays' director of marketing Simon Gulliford was on hand to explain: "The customer is cleverer than we give him credit for and there is a trend for advertisers to dumb things down to the lowest common denominator." He went on to criticise Lloyds TSB's ads as "fluff and candy".

If proof were needed that Barclays' advertising is heading inexorably upmarket, one only need look at their new frontman. Jackson, the voice of reason, is also currently the voice of fingerlickin' Kentucky Fried Chicken, and plays Jedi Knight Mace Windu in the fluff-and-candy epic Star Wars Episode II: Attack of the Clones. He clearly knows a thing or two about going to market.

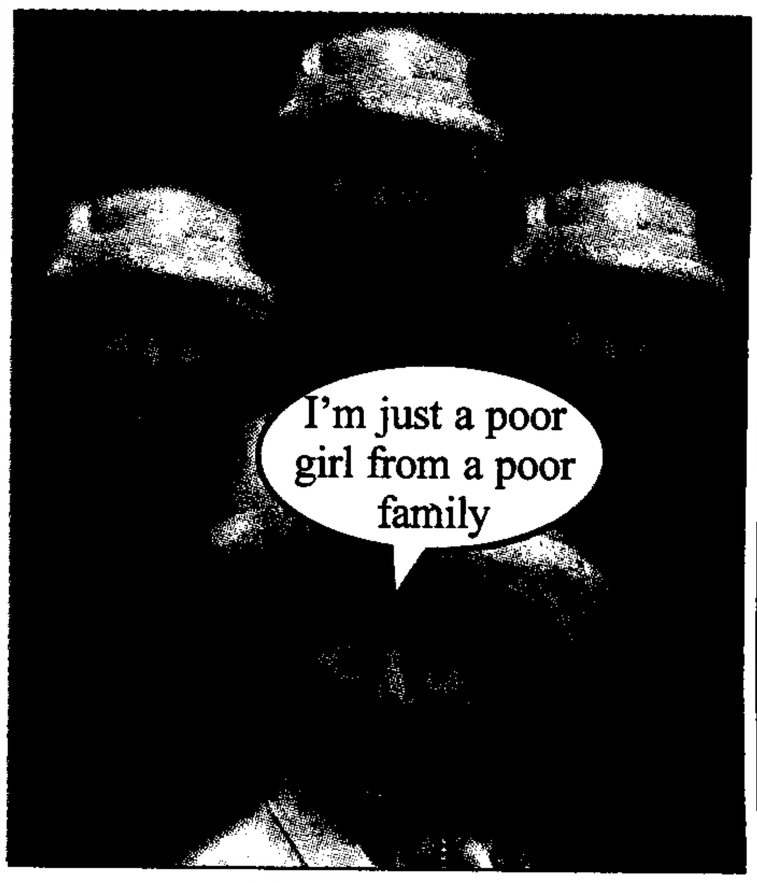
If placement is 90 percent of advertising, Barclays' new campaign has made a commendable bid for the intellectual high-ground – it debuted in that beacon of high-culture Big Brother and has been littered throughout coverage of the World Cup, where Barclays are the fifth largest advertiser. It's hard to see what you're average Big Brother devotee will make of metaphorical piggies going to metaphorical markets, nor whether Inger-land supporters will know or care about bulls and bears. But they will certainly know bull when they see it.

THE ad mock-up – a what-if? in which agencies get to flex their creative muscles for some free publicity – is a staple for filling a media page. Recent examples have included mock-ups to "sell" Europe or the monarchy to the public.

Readers of Accountancy Age will have been none too surprised, therefore, to see a piece inviting three leading agencies to suggest how they'd repair the sullied image of accountancy in the wake of the Enron/Andersen debacle. Of the three consulted, only an agency called J Walter Thompson decided not to mention the Enron crisis at all. This might have been because a week before the stunt, J Walter Thompson's parent company, WPP, sacked their accountants, Andersen, in the wake of the Enron scandal.

SPLIT personalities

Bob Moore



Queen

DUMB BRITAIN

The Weakest Link, BBC1/2

Anne Robinson: Which Douglas lost both legs but still flew in the Battle of Britain?

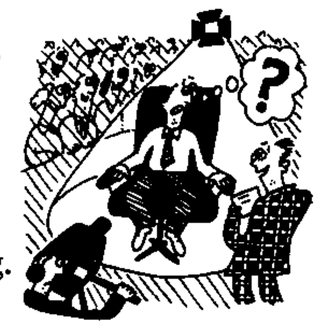
Contestant: Douglas Hurd.

Robinson: What insect is commonly found hovering above lakes?

Contestant: Crocodiles.

Robinson: Introduced in Britain in 1978, the State Earnings Related Pension Scheme is better known by what acronym?

Contestant: P.A.Y.E.



Family Fortunes, ITV

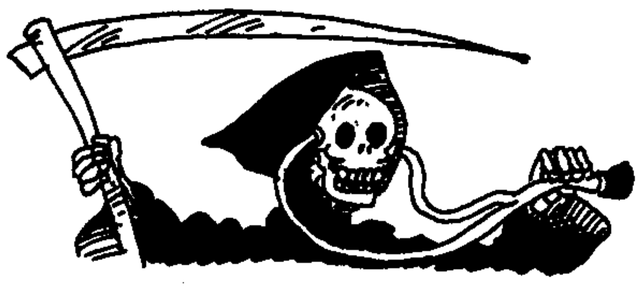
Les Dennis: Name a type of fork not used for eating.

Contestant: Guy Fawkes.

SUPERMODELS

KERBER

Boots CHEMIST
NOW SELLING BOTOX
GOD— BOTOX IS SPREADING EVERYWHERE!!!
YEAH!
IT STARTED IN MY FOREHEAD BUT NOW I THINK IT'S PARALYSED MY BRAIN!
HOW DO YOU TELL?



DOING THE ROUNDS

Whistleblowing in West Wales

WHY has Dr Huw Llewelyn, a consultant diabetic specialist at West Wales General Hospital, been sacked? According to Carmarthenshire NHS trust, he was dismissed on 21 March because of the findings of two reports. But these contain only vague and unfounded allegations.

Despite being suspended since November 1999, Llewelyn has never been given specific detail of any charge against him, such as a date or place where he may have acted in such a way that indicated misconduct or incompetence; and he was never given a warning of any kind of his dismissal. This is a flagrant breach of his contract, which robs him of a salary while he appeals.

Llewelyn does, however, have a long and well-documented record of raising concerns about the quality of diabetes care at West Wales hospital. When he arrived in 1994, he found that a nurse had been doing the diabetic work of a consultant for the previous 10 years, both in the hospital and community. At first glance this might appear visionary (nurse consultants now routinely do a lot of diabetic care), but Llewelyn quite reasonably wanted proper job descriptions and a clarification of the responsibilities of the doctors and nurses. He particularly wanted to improve communication and teamwork, to ensure that complicated problems were referred for a consultant opinion.

His attempts met with resistance from the nurses and management, who seemed intent on running a second "rival" diabetic team. On 30 May 1996 he circulated a paper entitled "Nurses taking on junior doctors' work: a confusion of accountability"; but it became impossible to standardise diabetic care as he was excluded from the decision-making of the nurse-led team. He did, however, manage to collect evidence of substandard care, most notably when a diabetic man was belatedly referred to him. His leg full of pus had been misdiagnosed and, despite an amputation, he developed septicaemia and later died. However, his death certificate allegedly bears no record of his sepsis or operation.

The trust responded to Llewelyn's persistent concerns about the poor teamwork and communication by ordering two inquiries, in September and October 1999. The first was internal, the second a flying visit from the Royal College of Physicians. Ironically, or perhaps predictably, both reports claimed that it was Llewelyn who was responsible for the very things he was complaining about: poor teamwork and communication. His allegations of patient harm were not investigated, and the Royal College of Physicians went as far as to suggest that he was "unable to function as a consultant physician and work as a member of a clinical team. He will have to pursue another occupation." No particular evidence of misconduct or incompetence was produced, but he was sent home on gardening leave.

Llewelyn promptly reported himself to the GMC, who could find no evidence of substance of any of the allegations in either report. The GMC wrote to the trust asking for this evidence, but when none was forthcoming, it decided there was not even enough substance for a preliminary hearing. The trust did at least recognise the need for substantiation and ordered an independent investigation chaired by Mary O'Rourke, an appointee of the lord chancellor.

She conducted hearings in August and October 2001 and, once again, no specific allegation against Llewelyn was produced. O'Rourke indicated that the trust's case against him did not stand up. The trust then dismissed the inquiry before Llewelyn gave evidence, denying him the opportunity to voice his concerns.

The trust is now presenting the conclusions of its original, flawed reports as evidence to dismiss Llewelyn, who is appealing internally. If that fails, he will take the trust to an employment tribunal under the public interest disclosure act. The trust will defend itself vigorously, at large public expense, because a successful PIDA defence offers unlimited damages to those persecuted for raising concerns in good faith.

Most of those involved in persecuting Llewelyn have now left the trust but morale, already shaken by the "wrong kidney" case (*Eyes passim*), is said to be at an all-time low. In the meantime, Llewelyn may have to sell his house to fund his appeal and patients are being deprived of the services of a dedicated consultant who dared to question the status quo.

M.D.

DOWN ON THE FARM

ALTHOUGH DEFRA, the department for the elimination of farming, is useless at anything that matters, an unsung genius is at work in its gloomy corridors. How else to explain a move so cunning that, while continuing the demolition of British farming, it is welcomed by some farmers as benign and helpful?

Until now suckler cow premium (SCP) has only been payable on suckler cows: beef cows which have borne a calf in the past 12 months. In a sudden volte-face, a beaming and liberal ministry is allowing up to 40 percent of claims per herd to be made on heifers, and not just in-calf heifers who might join the herd, but any heifers over eight months old.

Across the country suckler farmers are dribbling over their calculators with excitement. Any beef breeder who either does or might fatten their own beef animals could now buy extra suckler cow quota and claim up to 66 percent more premium for keeping heifers which would previously have been reared with no subsidy at all.

So where is the catch? Well, there is a fixed quantity of quota, so the immediate result will be a rocketing of quota price to the point where only a "return on investment" can be made, rather than any subsidy for farming as intended. There is no spare quota available to use this allowance, so for every heifer claimed on there must be someone else reducing their claims.

The ministry has to pay the same amount of premium every year anyway, so doesn't give a brass cow whether the payments promote genuine suckled beef. Quite the reverse: any quota coming on to the market from farmers retiring will be snapped up by producers for the new heifer allowance, which is the better economic option. The result? A fall in suckled beef production by 40 percent over the next few years, a disastrous shortage of store cattle for finishing, a big influx of nice, cheap, imported beef – and a growing smile on the face of Margaret Beckett.

As an added bonus there will be little quota available for new entrants, so production will concentrate in fewer, larger units, which is all part of the grand design to "restructure", aka dismantle, family farms.

This theme goes back to the hideous evil inflicted on farming when milk, cow and sheep quotas were introduced. Just as this time, the farmers of the day were more than happy: these quotas, intended by the EU to be national assets offering continuing support to those actually in farming, were simply given away to become part of the private capital of each farmer. This is the same as the privatisation of any other state asset: a giving to the present by borrowing from the future. Every year more farmers have to pay for the right to subsidy.

'Gumboot'

SIGNAL FAILURES

Darling fudge of May

ALISTAIR Darling is yet another new transport secretary doomed to fail with the railways because of the privatised system's hopeless inefficiency.

The system enjoys better funding — from public and private funds and sky-high fares — than British Rail did, but much of the cash is frittered away. "New" Labour is so scared of taking responsibility for rail it hands over billions of pounds without ensuring the money is spent in line with government policy.

The decision to wreck the Network South-East railcard, as of this month, is a case in point. The grasping train operators imposed new conditions that make the railcard useless for 90 percent of journeys in the south-east. People will switch from off-peak trains with empty seats to crowded roads. This contravenes government policies on transport, the environment, health and social inclusion. It may also increase the rail subsidies required. Yet the government and "strategic" rail authority (SRA) made no attempt to save the railcard.

The sacrifice of a popular cross-company product by the corporate mob demonstrates that what was once a national network is still being ripped apart by companies maximising their profits. Rivers of cash are vanishing into the sinkholes of dividends, bungling management, consultants, administrators and compensation for risk-averse Railtrack shareholders — plus the ever-growing bureaucracy that struggles to impose order on the chaos.

Cost-control is so weak that upgrading infrastructure now costs nearly three times what it did under BR. Companies like Arriva and National Express are raking in profits and giving executives massive bonuses while investing next to nothing and providing poor services.

Stephen Byers belatedly noticed the problems but tried to tackle them through even more bureaucracy. His guidance to the SRA gave it the task of making 100 companies work together for the common good. Byers wanted it to be a commanding organisation like the old BR Board — so why haven't we got a new BRB, with major expertise and powers, instead of the pathetic SRA? Why are the original franchises being re-let to the same piss-poor companies for a further 15 or 20 years instead of being run directly by the SRA/BRB? Why is the SRA doling out huge open-ended subsidies to franchisees without exerting control over management and costs (*Eye* 1047)? Why is track maintenance still left to competing contractors? Why is Railtrack never challenged on its ludicrous charges for investment projects?

Making 100 companies work together is impossible because each has a duty to its shareholders. Rail privatisation has achieved none of the benefits promised by the Tories: it hasn't improved services, reduced the public funding needed or made managers more responsive to consumers. There is now more private-sector investment, especially in trains, than under BR — but only because it is underwritten by hefty government guarantees and subsidies.

Even after Potters Bar, however, renationalisation isn't on the agenda. Gwyneth Dunwoody or other Labour MPs on the Commons transport select committee, which last month pointed out some home truths about the 10-year transport plan, have not been called upon because they would demand pragmatic changes to, er, improve the railways. Instead we have another yes man with no transport experience who relies on what discredited civil servants and advisers tell him and will probably keep up the pretence that there's some logic and merit in the Tories' slapdash privatisation.

'Dr B. Ching'

ROTTEN BOROUGHS

BLOBBYGATE

LANCASTER MP and former city councillor Hilton Dawson may have to start thinking about rekindling his career in social work after the next election, thanks to his role in the fiasco surrounding Noel Edmonds' failed attempt to create a "Crinkley Bottom" theme park at Morecambe Bay.

The Labour MP could see his fragile 481 majority disappear if he is surcharged or strongly criticised in the long-awaited report by the district auditor over "Blobbygate" as the affair is known locally. Dawson has been questioned twice by the auditor, Clive Portman, as he and his solicitors (Rowe & Maw) decide whether or not to recover any or all of the estimated £3m it has cost local taxpayers to fund the doomed theme park and the subsequent inquiry into what went wrong — an inquiry which will have taken four years in August.

Dawson, former head of the city council's economic development committee, is one of several councillors and former councillors who, along with former senior officers from the authority, played a leading role in the affair which Edmonds describes as "one of the greatest scandals in local government history".

The auditor's provisional findings have already identified "unlawful activity" as well as "imprudent" "irrational" and "mistaken" acts. Former city treasurer David Corker, who spent public money on legal advice in a desperate bid to persuade the auditor that he was the best man to conduct the council's response to the allegations, may have been better employed trying to explain why the sponsorship cash promised to fund the theme park never materialised. Corker and former town clerk Bill Pearson may also be able to explain why it was decided to unilaterally change the council's agreement with Edmonds' Unique company, a decision which saw the financial obligation on the council shift from £120,000 over three years to £1m. Pearson has since retired with an enhanced pension — the granting of which has already been deemed unlawful by Portman

MINUS GALA

ON 8 May the Queen opened Durham's new £14m Gala Theatre, part of the city council's grandiose Millennium City scheme (*Eyes passim*). Just two weeks later liquidators were appointed when the Entertainment Team, the company set up to run the theatre, went bust owing more than £100,000 to 150 creditors.

The venue had been open for business since January, but a £75,000 loan from the city council had to be made so the place didn't actually close before its official "opening" by Brenda. The theatre is now being run by Durham city council – hardly grounds for optimism.

One attraction that has not brought crowds flocking to the Gala is a short film, *The Sacred Journey*, about the life of top Durham saint Cuthbert. The contract for the £1m film was awarded to director Brendan Quayle, a tennis-playing chum of Durham city council chief executive Colin Shearsmith, without being put out to tender — a fact revealed in 1999 in *Eye* 991.

When, weeks late, the film opened in March, Durham's director of environmental services John Jennings predicted that 100,000 visitors a year would come to see it. The theatre is for some reason coy about revealing the actual figures, but one Durham resident tells the *Eye:* "There were at least six other people in the audience when I saw it." Next year, Cannes!

PRIVATE FUNCTION

CHESTER city council has an interesting interpretation of the term "public meeting".

A resident wrote to council chief executive Paul Durham, concerned about the accountability of the city's economic development forum, aka "task group". The task group, which reports to the council's planning committee, consists of representatives from major employers in the area, such as the American MBNA bank, Marks & Spencer and BAE Systems, plus senior councillors, the principal of the local HE college and the editor of the local paper.

Recently the task group reported approvingly on MBNA's application for a huge credit card HQ on 10.5 hectares of green belt south of the city. The application was then rubber-stamped by the council. Local opponents claim the development is unnecessary, will destroy wildlife habitats and add to already severe traffic problems. They say the task group is a cosy cabal in which community and environmental voices are not represented.

Chief executive Paul Durham, replying to the resident who asked why the task group's meetings were not open to the public, wrote back to say they were, but, er, "they are often hosted at semi-private venues very early in the morning at 7.30... e.g. M&S, Chester College, Moat House..." Nor are these breakfast-time get-togethers advertised. How much more open can you get?

BOOM TOWN

TONY BLAIR'S drive to improve public services hasn't had much effect in his County Durham constituency. Indeed, it's a wonder some of his constituents have been neither gassed nor blown up courtesy of Sedgefield borough council.

One of the most damning reports ever issued by the audit commission's housing inspectors has been delivered in Labour-controlled Sedgefield. So appalled were the inspectors that they took the rare step of awarding no stars, out of a possible three, and were "uncertain" whether Sedgefield was likely to stir itself to improve matters.

Chief inspector Roy Irwin remarked: "We found the service to be very poor and so the level of change required is substantial." The inspectors found Sedgefield's policy on servicing gas appliances in tenants' homes failed to meet legal requirements, and that more than 1,000 homes -- 10 percent of the total -- were overdue for their annual gas safety check.

● **POMPOUS Cardiff council leader Russell Goodwage (*Eyes passim*) infuriated parents and teachers last week by presenting each of the city's school children with a commemorative jubilee mug. The anger arose not because of republican sentiment, but because schools and parent-teacher associations hadn't been told the gift was on the way, and many had already spent hundreds of pounds ordering mugs of their own. An estimated £60,000 of taxpayers' money – enough for three classroom teachers — was spent on the mugs, which as well as a picture of Brenda featured the Cardiff coat of arms and the prominent inscription: "Presented by Russell Goodway, the Right Honourable Lord Mayor of Cardiff". Truly something for the grandchildren to treasure.**

FRAUD COLDLINE

THERE seems a curious reluctance to investigate fraud in Labour-controlled Derby. The benefit fraud inspectorate (BFI) reports that the city council "is not sending out the message to residents in Derby that benefit fraud does not pay".

Derby's fraud investigation team has prosecuted no one for housing benefit fraud in the last three years and has never conducted an interview under caution. The BFI's report notes that councillors seem strangely reluctant to advertise the council's benefit fraud hotline. They agreed that posters advertising the number "should not be sited in libraries, sports centres, the main housing benefit office or other council departments' public offices". It was also thought a good idea not to advertise the number in either the council's own internal telephone directory or in the housing newsletter sent to tenants. Which possibly explains why, since the hotline was installed in May 2001, it has received but one allegation of housing benefit fraud.

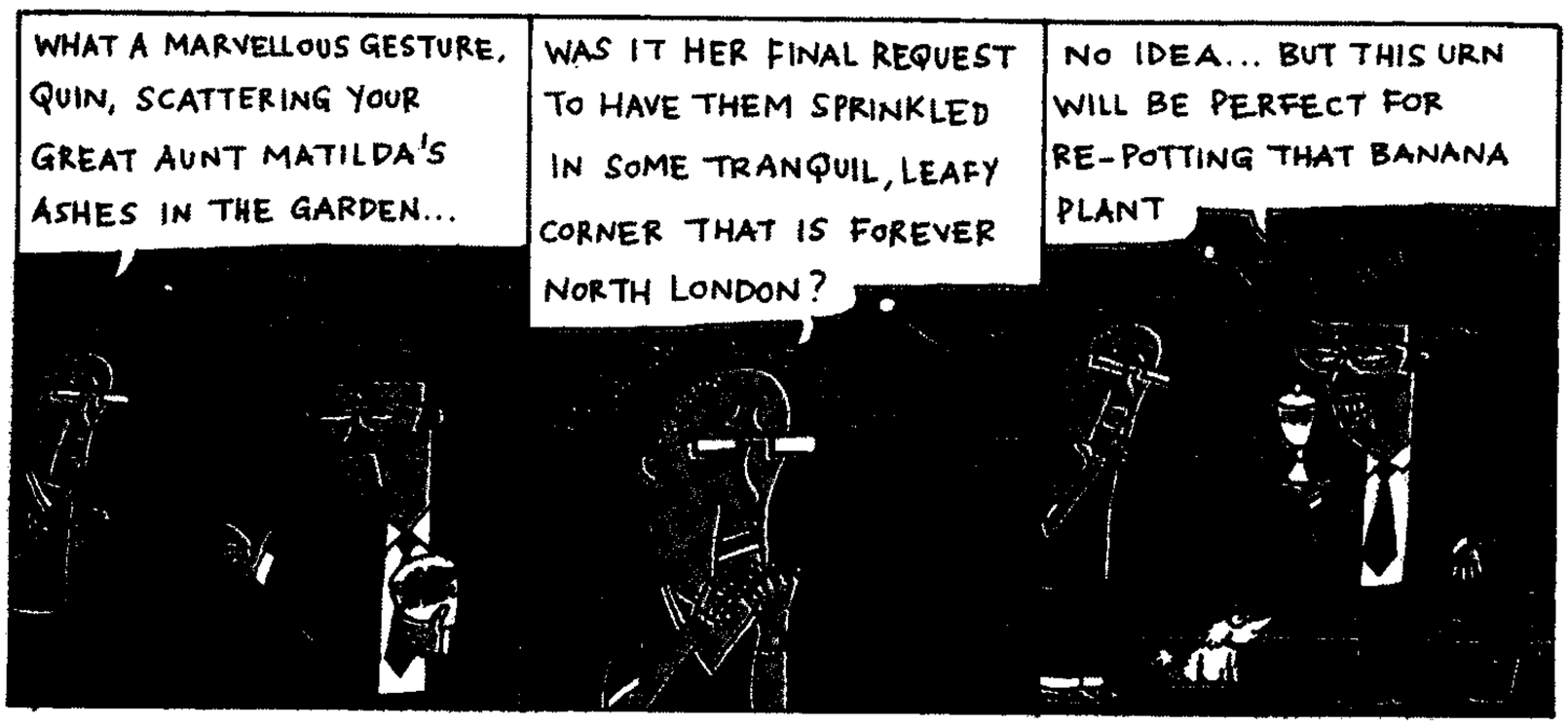
LIBRARY NEWS

THE trend for making libraries appeal to the lowest common denominator continues in East Sussex, where the county's three music libraries in Lewes, Hastings and Eastbourne have been merged into the main local libraries.

The council claims the move was necessary under the "best value" system because the music libraries only accounted for 1 percent of issues. Those elements of the library with mass appeal – CDs and books about music – will still be immediately available to the general public. Sheet music, however, a resource only required by those who actually play an instrument, has to be ordered days in advance and is being stored in a separate building in Lewes which last year was affected by flooding.

IT'S GRIM UP NORTH LONDON

KNIFE & PACKER


WHAT A MARVELLOUS GESTURE, QUIN, SCATTERING YOUR GREAT AUNT MATILDA'S ASHES IN THE GARDEN...
WAS IT HER FINAL REQUEST TO HAVE THEM SPRINKLED IN SOME TRANQUIL, LEAFY CORNER THAT IS FOREVER NORTH LONDON?
NO IDEA... BUT THIS URN WILL BE PERFECT FOR RE-POTTING THAT BANANA PLANT

Number crunching

15p ■ Sum for which Dame Shirley Porter flogged off three Westminster cemeteries in the late 1980s.

0p ■ Sum for which "new" Labour flogged off the millennium dome last month.

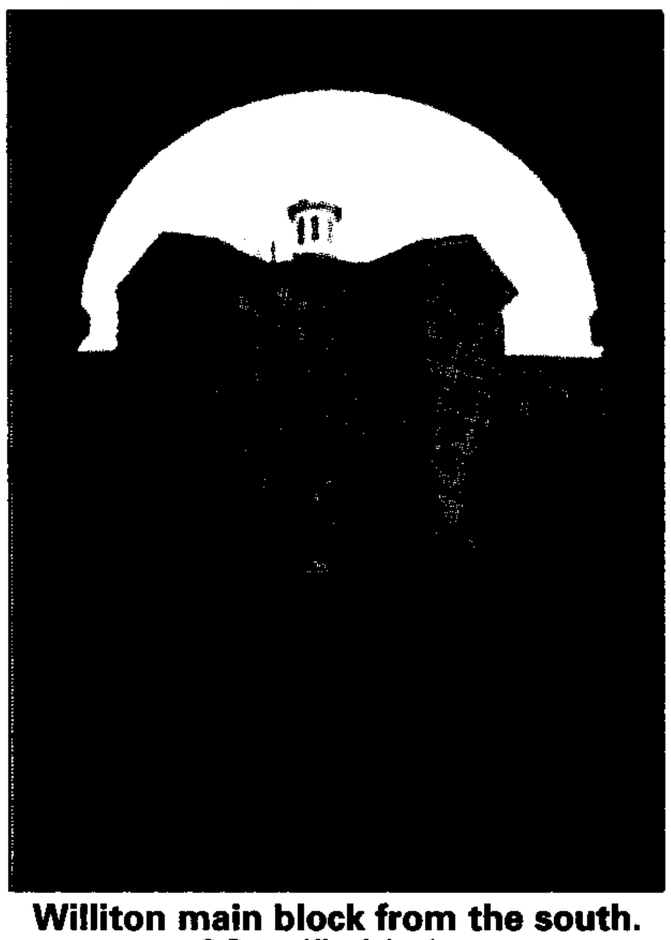
NOOKS and CORNERS

THERE was dancing in the streets of Birmingham when it was revealed that Lord Rogers of Riverside had been named as architect of the city's new library. This "Library of Birmingham" will cost £100m, so the fees ought to keep the Richard Rogers Partnership ticking over for a few years yet.

The Rogers firm was chosen in preference to Ted Cullinan, Future Systems, Michael Hopkins, Moshe Safdie, Snøhetta & Spence and Wilkinson Eyre – almost all of which produce more interesting and imaginative buildings. But the leader of the city council, Sir Albert Bore, wanted a big name to glamorise "Birmingham's ongoing urban renaissance" and be part of the bid to become European Capital of Culture in 2008.

But why build an expensive new library out at Eastside at all when the existing Central Library in Paradise Circus is perfectly adequate and has the merit of being central?

Despite the talk of consultation and democracy, the city council has never thought to ask long-suffering people of Birmingham if they want the Central Library relocated. And those with long memories will recall that the existing concrete mega-structure, opened in 1970, replaced the old Birmingham Reference Library, a magnificent mid-Victorian building by E.M. Barry and J.H. Chamberlin, which was torn down (except for the Shakespeare Room) during the city's orgy of destruction in the 1960s. Do we never learn?



Williton main block from the south.
© Peter Higginbotham

IT sometimes seems that Britain is irredeemably wasteful and destructive when it comes to the built heritage, always throwing away buildings which, with intelligence and goodwill, could be reused and revitalised.

One of the principal victims has been solid Victorian institutions like hospitals and asylums which, when redundant, have been given away by public authorities — along with their generous estates — to developers to exploit, with the buildings themselves usually allowed to become derelict and then demolished.

A case in point is Williton Workhouse in Somerset, which served as a hospital after 1930. Built in 1837-40, it is one of many workhouses designed by George Gilbert Scott and W.B. Moffatt; but, unlike Scott's later work, it is not Gothic but austerely and impressively Classical. Pevsner considered it "quite a dignified design".

When the hospital closed in 1989 it was acquired — how? why? — by a firm of builders, whose scheme for converting it into flats and building houses on the land behind came to nothing. It is now owned by a Mr Notaro, who sells plastic windows. Williton Workhouse was placed on the Somerset Register of Buildings at Risk in 1992 and on English Heritage's national register of the same six years later. In 1996 the Somerset Building Preservation Trust, a non-profit making organisation, commissioned a feasibility study which found that the only realistic uses for it is either as social housing or as offices for West Somerset district council — an admirable idea proposed in 1989.

In 1997 the county council served a repairs notice on the owner. This was ignored, so a compulsory purchase order was made the next year. This became the subject of a public inquiry by the department of culture, media 'n' sport in 1999. Unfortunately, while the inspector's report was awaited, the district council decided it did not now want to convert the workhouse into offices. The preservation trust then had to withdraw as it dared not take on the huge building without an agreed end-user.

After a delay of almost two years, the secretary of state has now declined to confirm the CPO, thus implicitly accepting the owner's contention that housing is the best option when the funding and necessary permissions for the trust's scheme were not in place. But the district council was only prepared to spend public money on planning permission, listed building consent, etc, once ownership by CPO had been secured: Catch 22.

So, thanks a lot, DCMS, for further discouraging responsible local authorities from trying to save buildings through compulsory purchase. Meanwhile, the old workhouse continues to rot. Soon it will be too late...

'Piloti'

I-SPY *Dubai*

Submitted by Mark Wyndham. £10 paid for similar submissions. *(SAE required for return of photographs. No transparencies.)*

MUSIC & MUSICIANS

CONCERTGOERS seeking refuge from the world cup at Bath's International Music Festival the other weekend were to be disappointed.

The curiously programmed grand finale was a multi-media extravaganza in which chamber music was performed against a background of "creative" videos — most of which were unexceptionable. Playing a Bach cello suite to long and tedious footage of a woman knitting caused no real offence, except to Bach.

But 200 years ago, when Jane Austen danced the quadrille with cavalry officers in the Assembly Rooms, she could scarcely have imagined that these gracious spaces would one day accommodate an audience watching images of people writhing naked under rubberised incontinence sheets. Or that the audience would have to sit through Monteverdi songs to the accompaniment of David Beckham lookalikes strutting their stuff on recorded extracts from *Match of the Day*.

Tellingly, the genteel folk of Bath raised few objections to the naked writhings. But the football was the last straw: yet another case of serious culture yielding to the opposition.

This year's Cheltenham Festival, meanwhile, has a concert where the audience is specifically encouraged to bring along mobile phones for a new composition that exploits the racket of as many personalised ringing tones as you can get together in one auditorium. As festival director Michael Berkeley said, announcing this exciting, avant-garde initiative: "If you can't beat 'em, join 'em." It's a dismal prospect.

`Lunchtime O'Boulez'

Warballs

"Clifton Broumand, from Landover in Maryland, described Wednesday's game as a 'cosmic role reversal' and a tribute to those killed in the 11 September suicide hijack attacks on the United States. 'Today we were Portugal and they were the old United States,' he said. 'This was US soccer's tribute to the people who died on 11 September.'"

– Report from *CNN.com* on the American victory over Portugal in the World Cup.

"Despite the pundits' gloomy predictions and the inevitable despondency after 11 September, Yorkshire still seems to be bucking all trends and continuing to flourish." – *Yorkshire Post.*

"The power of the new medium was demonstrated in the wake of the 11 September attack on the United States when people flocked to the Internet. The BBC recorded a 100 per cent increase in traffic... So the arrival of the Office of Fair Trading's re-designed website is timely."

– *Fair Trading*, magazine of the OFT.

YOUNG BRITISH ARTISTS BY BIRCH

One records herself reading pornography, another makes maze-like constructions, the third works hoisted above London on a crane, and the fourth's sculptures are constructed by his home-made computer.
GUARDIAN ARTS
TURNER PRIZE NOMINEES ANNOUNCED.
HIGHLIGHT OF ART YEAR
No painters this year, then?
Well, I don't suppose they wanted to be too controversial.

"Excuse me, but you've got a piece of lettuce – and a tortoise – stuck between your teeth"

MMR UPDATE

A POTENTIALLY devastating rebuttal of the government's persistent claim that there is no possible link between the measles, mumps and rubella triple vaccine and autism has emerged from a new study at Trinity College, Dublin.

The study has found that the measles virus lodged in the intestines of 12 children with gut disease and autism has come from vaccination and *not* from exposure to wild or natural measles.

According to an abstract of the study, gut biopsies were taken from the intestines of 12 out of 75 autistic children who had already been found to have persistent measles virus. As a control the researchers used brain tissue from patients with SSPE, the rare degenerative brain disease associated with persistent measles infection. They confirmed vaccine strain measles in the guts of all 12 children, compared with wild measles in the control group.

"This pilot study further corroborates our previous findings of an association between the presence of measles virus and gut abnormalities in children with developmental disorder, and indicates the origins of the virus to be vaccine strain," say the researchers.

Although they do not say how many of the 12 children had had MMR, it is known that 95 percent of the autistic children in the earlier tests had had the triple vaccine.

By now, the department of health might have been expected to have at least niggling doubts about claims that vaccine strain measles is 100 percent safe when it seems at the very least it is acting aberrantly in the guts of these children. Health chiefs and ministers might also have been expected to have adopted the "precautionary principle" they adhered to in other vaccine cases until the MMR question is properly answered. But no. Ever since gastroenterologist Andrew Wakefield first raised doubts in 1998, the government and health chiefs have consistently refused to undertake meaningful research to answer the questions and have continually moved the goalposts.

Reacting to the latest Dublin study, a department of health spokesman said: "We look at all new research very carefully. The earlier work by this team was reviewed by experts including the Joint Committee on Vaccination and Immunisation, and there were no concerns."

Before the *Eye* published its special report, *MMR: The story so far*, last month, we asked the department if it would take action were vaccine strain measles ever to be found in the guts of autistic children.

Then a spokesman said: "Demonstrating the presence in specific tissue would not prove causality. With no excess of autistic children with bowel problems post MMR [*This is heavily disputed between experts. Ed*] even a confirmed presence of measles vaccine virus could mean that autism or bowel disease causes it to be present, not that the virus causes these conditions."

Letters

Private Eye

MMRgy-bargy

Sir,

Private Eye Special Report – MMR

We were saddened (although not entirely surprised), to read the news item about our review, for the British Medical Journal, of the Eye's special report. The comment that our report was scathing "...but they would say that, wouldn't they" could be taken to imply that our critical comments were primarily a result of receiving reimbursement from vaccine manufacturers for attending educational meetings or conducting research. It is a pity that the Eye consider this to be an appropriate response, but then they would say that wouldn't they? While it is correct to say that we would be critical, it is because we have taken the time to look at ALL the scientific evidence on this issue, not just that provided by a select very vocal group. We would be the first to highlight any manipulation of the truth on the part of drug companies or the Department of Health and are very offended that it is implied that this is not the case.

We would like to point out that the Eye knows that the BMJ omitted to mention the above funding because we have been assiduous in declaring this in the past and it was only an oversight on the part of the BMJ that it did not happened on this occasion. Any funding we receive from vaccine manufacturers does not go into our own pockets. Indeed, since we are aware that some people would consider receiving any such funds to be tantamount to being the mouthpiece of the manufacturers, we donate any payments other than funding for research, to charitable organisations. In this instance our fee from the BMJ was donated to the National Autistic Society. What, we wonder, will the Eye make of that?

We look forward to reading a more considered review of your comments.

Yours sincerely,
HELEN BEDFORD,
Lecturer in Child Health, Institute of Child Health, London.

DAVID ELLIMAN,
Consultant in Community Child Health, St George's Hospital, London.

Effendi offence

Sir,

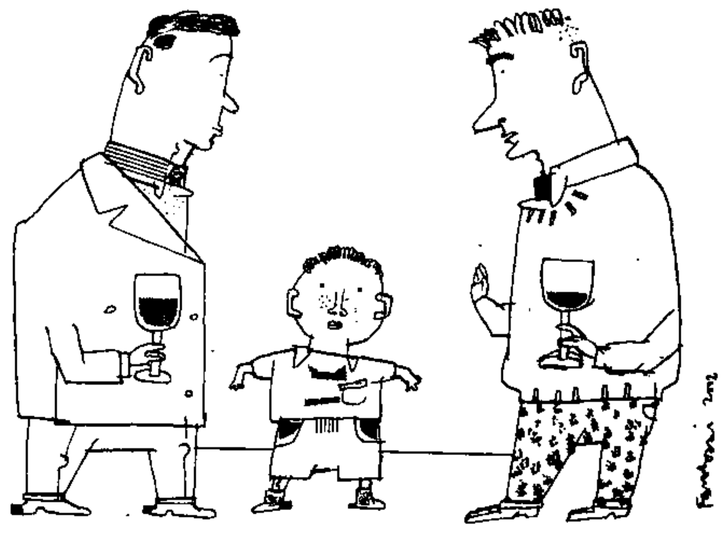
One of the great things about your organ over the years has been your sustained disapprobation of ignorance.

Pity then about the Mike Barfield cartoon (Eye 1055, p15). "Effendi" is a Turkish title of respect, "chiefly applied to government officials and to members of the learned professions" [OED]: use of the greeting spread throughout the Ottoman Empire. Then there was WWI. It has not been in common usage outside Turkey for half a century and longer. Pity then that he depicts two cartoon peninsular Arabs speaking Turkish. This might have might have been judicious for their subjugated forbears, indeed for Allenby and Lawrence in imperial mode. But not today.

The caption could work better in colloquial Arabic – "Salaam aleikum", "peace be with you", in general use today throughout the Arab world and beyond, in the Islamosphere. Avoiding the historically inflicted, now obsolete, Imperial Ottoman grovel. The percentage could stay the same!

Wa aleikum salaam...
LESLIE HONEYMAN,
Glasgow.

Scenes You Seldom See (12)



"Ben's not very bright for his age"

Physical comedy

Sir,

Perhaps a little more explanation was needed when putting the lecture title "Beyond the Physics of Queueing"(Eye 1054) into Pseuds's corner. However, as a physics educated tosser myself, I should like to point out to Robert Matthews(Letters, 1055) that everything has physics connections, including sorting through a collection of used train tickets. That doesn't mean innocent people should have to be subjected to an over one hour lecture on "the physics of getting your train tickets in order".

So well done to the Eye for taking some much deserved piss.

Yours,
BEN TOMPKINS

PS: Anyone who finds the title "Beyond the Physics of Queueing" intriguing should get out more, and definitely should not therefore accuse others of being tossers.

Blowing in the wind

Sir,

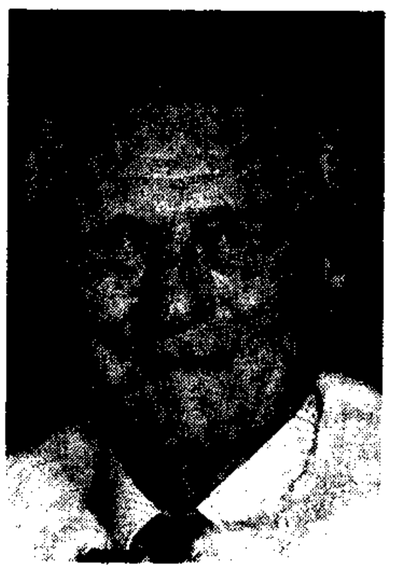
On page 13 of Eye 1054, Ken Pyne's cartoon depicts a man in some anxiety due to having bought flowers to comfort a hay fever sufferer.

He has no reason to worry. Flowers do not cause hay fever. They are reliant on insects to carry their pollen, hence their sweet smell, colourful petals and nectar.

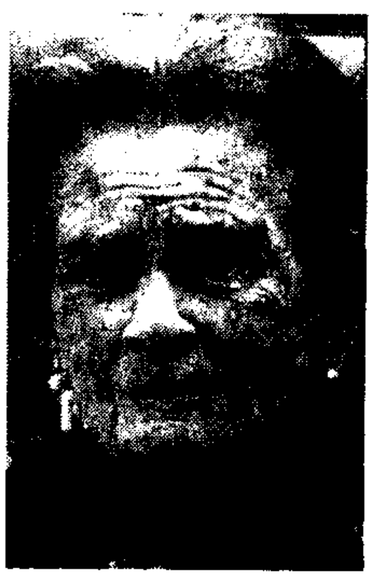
Grasses, which are wind-pollinated, are the main cause of allergic rhinitis to affected Britons such as myself.

Yours sincerely,
LUDOVIC TOLHURST-CLEAVER,
Victoria Park, Manchester.

Lookalike



Duchess



Heseltine

Sir,

I wonder whether your readers have noticed the extraordinary resemblance between Michael Heseltine and Princess Alice, Duchess of Gloucester. Are they by any chance related?

RICHARD CARRINGTON,
Minchinhampton, Gloucestershire.

Food for thought

Sir,

In Eye 1055 (p.9) you drew attention to recent commissions by Carlton TV's director of programmes for the West Country, Jane McCloskey.

The implication was that, in view of her close relationship with the producer of said food shows, Ms McCloskey's decision-making was distinctly "fishy".

Now, I commend your splendid organ's ongoing search for impropriety but this little morsel is not as spicy as it might at first seem.

Having had the pleasure of working with her in the past, I can tell you that Jane is a distinctly atypical member of the meeja clan. She is talented, honest and above all wholly ethical.

Her exceptional track record for commissioning successful and acclaimed television is a reliable indication that the main ingredient of this story is in fact sour grapes.

Rather than questioning Jane's judgement, I would suggest scrutinising the motives of your "sauce".

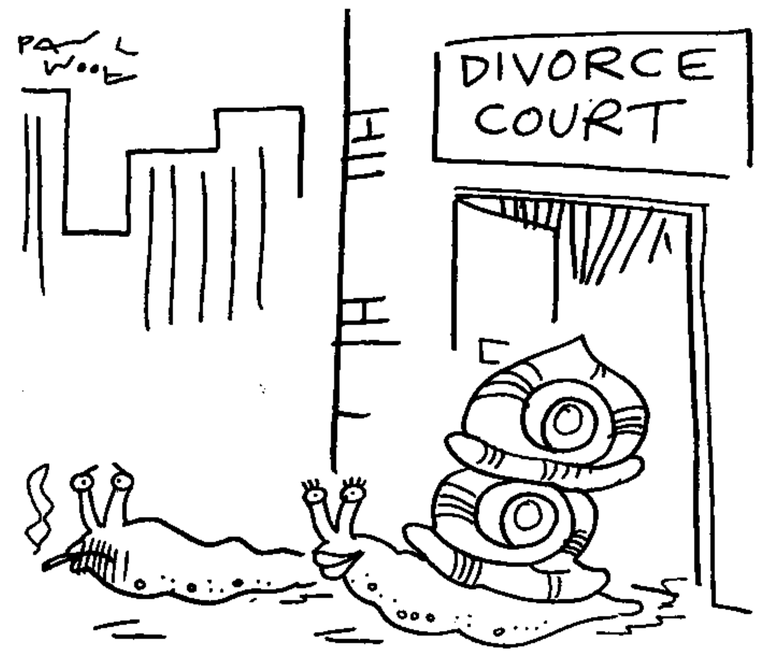
Yours, a loyal reader,
MATT WOODS,
Via email.

Sir,

I nearly fell off the lavatory seat when I saw my name in your esteemed organ. Can't think how I survived for the past thirty years in the TV business without forming such a relationship.

Yours sincerely,
DAVID PRITCHARD,
Denham Productions, Plymouth.

PS. I'd like to know the name of the little shit who squealed on me and where he's been for the past five years.



Giles circus

Sir,

Re Bookworm's unwarranted attack upon "Sir" Giles Gordon. As a former client of the esteemed Giles, one really must protest. It cannot be denied that he frequently visits upon his authors the most appalling mischief, but that is part of his charm. It is also true that when he is, ahem, in the mood, he can cause several world wars to break out at once: I have seen him do it on many occasions. For a significant birthday some years ago his authors thought of compiling his worst/best transgressions into a tome called "What Giles Did To Me" and presenting it to him, but we quickly realised several volumes would not be enough and dropped the idea because we couldn't decide which tales to include and which to omit. All of this can be verified if need be, but Bookworm's accusation against GG in the last Eye was simply the worst insult I have ever read or heard against him. He may hang his authors out to dry for the joy of the thing, but that he copied Caradoc King? Shurely shome mishtake!

Come now, do the decent thing and apologise at once, Bookworm, or we'll force you to read GG's autobiography from cover to cover.

MEG HENDERSON,
Via email.

Sold down the Wandle?

Sir,

Your bit about Wimbledon F.C. (Eye 1054) is wide of the mark. The public "in the area" as represented by the local Haydon's Road Residents' Association are bitterly opposed to the Dons returning to the old Plough Lane site. It was an important issue in the recent elections which saw Labour lose the local ward to the Tories, trailing behind the Independent Residents Party.

Your article claims "massive support" for a return but the survey you quote sampled only 1,000 residents borough wide in a population of over 200,000. Few in the immediate vicinity appear to have been asked. Hardly representative?

Merton Council's support for the proposed move is only recent and coincided with the May elections. For many years the council has frustrated any attempts to bring the Dons home.

Our local MP suggests a £2.8m contribution from the Football Trust, but where is the rest of the finance coming from? Fulham's redevelopment of Craven Cottage is estimated at £70m and they own the land. Plough Lane is owned by Safeway with a reputed £12-15m value as a housing site.

The London borough of Merton is destitute and cannot afford to keep its libraries open. Central government will not even bale out Wembley and the club has no intention or the finance to return. Charles Koppell knows the site is not large enough for a modern all-seater stadium (it is why Sam Hamman moved it to Selhurst in the first place).

Equally as daft is the proposed move to Milton Keynes. Few Wimbledon supporters intend to make the expensive and arduous journey on a regular basis and the market research has yet to be published to show that the footballing public of Bucks will desert their existing clubs to support the Dons. Messrs Roekke and Koppel may have a brand new stadium for free, but who is going to fill it?

Before the club is ruined, I think we should be told!

STEPHEN SAUL,
Via email.

Lookalike?

Consignia — The Post Office

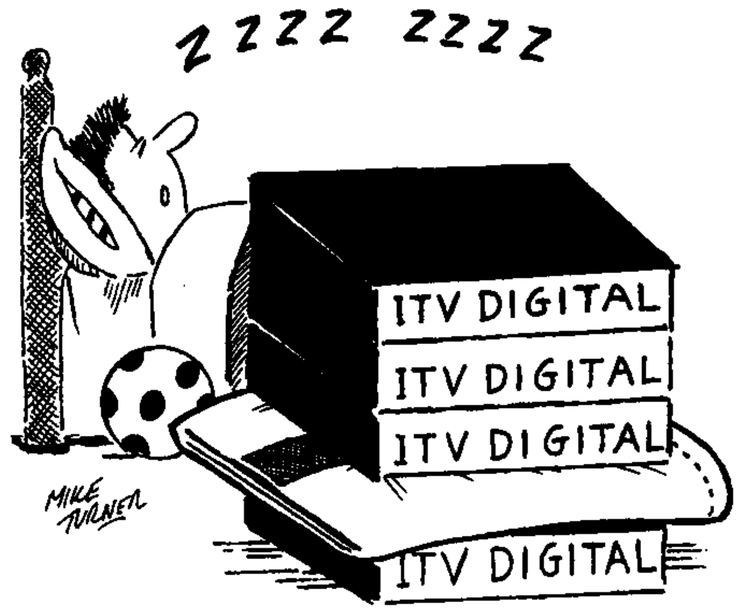
Royal Mail — Consignia

Sir,

Has anyone noticed the remarkable similarity between Consignia, the company formerly known as the Post Office, and Consignia, the company that is soon to be re-rebranded as the Royal Mail? Are they in any way not related?

Yours,
POSTMAN PAT,
Via snail mail.

101 Uses For An ITV Digital Box
No.3: Football Shorts Press



Another eff-up

Sir,

Memo to E.J. Thribb, writing about the founder of Vodaphone (sic). There's always an eff in Vodafone.

PETER HAMILTON,
Walton on Thames.

WorldCupballs

£10 paid for contributions

"Two questions – why were England so poor? And if they were poor – why?"
IAN PAYNE, Radio 5 Live
(Paul Palmer)

"Apart from picking the ball out of the net, he hasn't had to make a save."
RON ATKINSON, ITV
(Peter Davies)

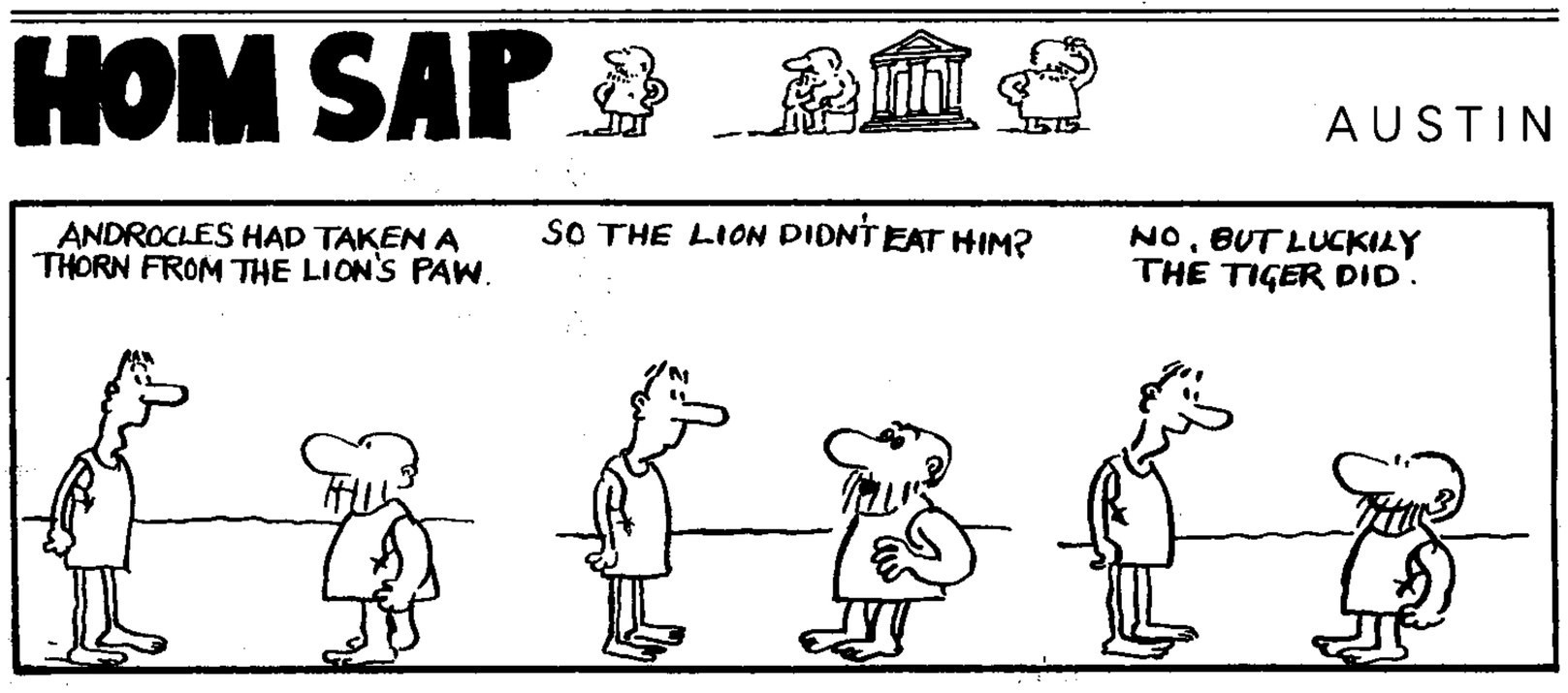
"Scholes is very influential for England at international level."
RON ATKINSON, ITV
(T. Gifford)

"He's not George Best... but, then again, no one is."
CLIVE TYLDESLEY, ITV
(Keith Agar)

"That was in the past; we're in the future now"
DAVID BECKHAM
(Grenville Barrett)

"At international level, giving the ball away doesn't work too often."
RON ATKINSON, ITV
(Chris Hickey)

"... the number of chances they had before the goal they missed..."
MARK LAWRENSON, BBC1
(Nick Holder)



Letter from **Port au Prince**

from Our Own Correspondent

HERE in the foothills around Petion-Ville, it's easy to forget the poverty and violence that has engulfed Haiti since US troops left in 1995 and their UN replacements went in 1996.

Since then our domestic economy has stagnated and the country has been flooded with imports like rice, dumped by subsidized American growers who undercut and drive local growers out of business. Civil unrest is a constant threat; local people are starving and our average daily calorie intake is now less than in Somalia.

The few foreign hacks who bother to visit, come straight to Petion-Ville though, ferried up the Ave Pan Americaine from the airport in Port au Prince. They sip liqueurs and batter the expense accounts of eager government officials; or they check their share options on CNN and read Graham Greene novels by the pool. Here, we don't have the regular power cuts that they do in P-au-P, you see; and nor does President Aristide in his palace.

Local hacks aren't so lucky. Most wouldn't make it past the armed guards who hang around the lobbies looking for bandits or "terrorists" — a word used by some in the ruling Fanmi Lavalas party to describe any journalist who dishes the dirt on Aristide and his cronies. One local radio station still has chunks missing from the wall where somebody shot dead a local journo who had told "lies" about the government.

Some local reporters do still take risks though. Darwin St Julien from the *Haiti Progres* newspaper and Allan Deshommes of Radio Atlantic recently headed north to St Raphael to cover a story most western agencies thought was over last year: the plight of workers who pick and process the oranges for liqueurs like Cointreau or Remy Martin.

It's no secret they have been badly treated. They work at speed with sharp knives and suffer terrible injuries to their hands, their skin being eaten away by the citric acid in the fruit. They have had to fight for even basic comforts at work like toilets and showers.

Trades unions and charities like War on Want gave both Cointreau and Remy such bad publicity they were forced to make concessions. Wages were increased from £1 to £2.70 a day; and showers, protective clothing and toilets were provided. End of story? Not quite. Violence has now broken out at the Guacimal orange plantation where Cointreau has a shareholding.

For decades workers have been allowed to plant crops in the plantation's un-harvested plots. The food they grow makes up in part for their terrible wages. Now they've been told they must pay for the privilege and they're not happy.

In a demonstration, workers were met by a group led by the local authorities, including the landowner and officials from the Lavalas ruling party. One of them fired shots at the crowd and a riot broke out. Among those injured were the two reporters, Darwin St Julien and Allan Deshommes. St Julien could lose an eye. Both were arrested "for their own protection" and taken by police helicopter to Port au Prince, where they are now imprisoned as "terrorists" without trial in the National Penitentiary. The Lavalas mayor of St Raphael told police he knew they were "terrorists".

But at least the hacks didn't suffer the fate of the two old men who had not taken part in the fighting and were found hiding in a house nearby. They were tied up and dragged back to the plantation where they were mutilated with knives before being beheaded and thrown into a hole.

FUNNY OLD WORLD

COMPILED BY **VICTOR LEWIS-SMITH**

● "It's true that Benjamin Stomberg made the cash promise on his radio show," a spokesman for Cumulus Broadcasting told reporters in Illinois, "but he only did it as a practical joke. There was never any intention of paying money to people who had the 93.5 KORB station logo tattooed on their forehead. The idea was simply that persons who responded to the announcement would be publicly scorned and ridiculed for their greed and lack of common sense."

Earlier, Richard Goddard Jr. and David Winkleman had explained why they were filing a $300,000 lawsuit for damages against Cumulus (the owners of 93.5 KORB). "We were listening to Stomberg's radio show one day, when he

announced that anyone willing to have the station's logo permanently tattooed on their foreheads would be awarded $30,000 a year, for five years. It sounded like a good deal to us, but we phoned in just to make sure, and he told us he was serious. His word was good enough for us, so that afternoon we went to the Scorpion's Den tattoo parlor, where a man who said he worked for KORB paid for our tattoos, took some photographs, and left.

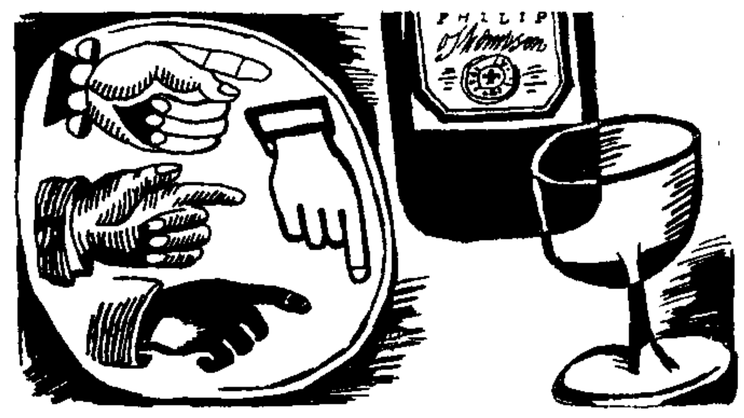
Next day, we were both fired from our jobs, because of the tattoos. And the station has never paid us so much as dime one. We're tattooed, we're angry, and we're suing." Craig Levien, the attorney for Columbus, said that "the company is vigorously contesting the lawsuit. Any intelligent person would have realised that Stomberg's offer was a practical joke. Trouble is, not all our listeners fall into that category." *(Illinois Quad-City Times, 27/5/02. Spotter: Michael Watson)*

— ● —

● *"I have ordered the military police to release the two men, because there is no law to charge them with," public prosecutor Nhou Thol told a court in Phnom Penh. "Eating human parts was common during the Khmer Rouge era, and the government has not yet passed a law outlawing cannibalism. But it is very bad taste, and it will be stopped."*

Military police chief Rath Sreang later revealed more details about the two men, both crematorium workers. "They were arrested last week for eating the fingers and toes of a body they were cremating. On closer investigation, villagers told us that the men had often been seen chewing on human parts, especially ears and nostrils, after the mourners had left the crematorium.

They had even boasted to friends about "having a finger buffet washed down with a bottle of wine."



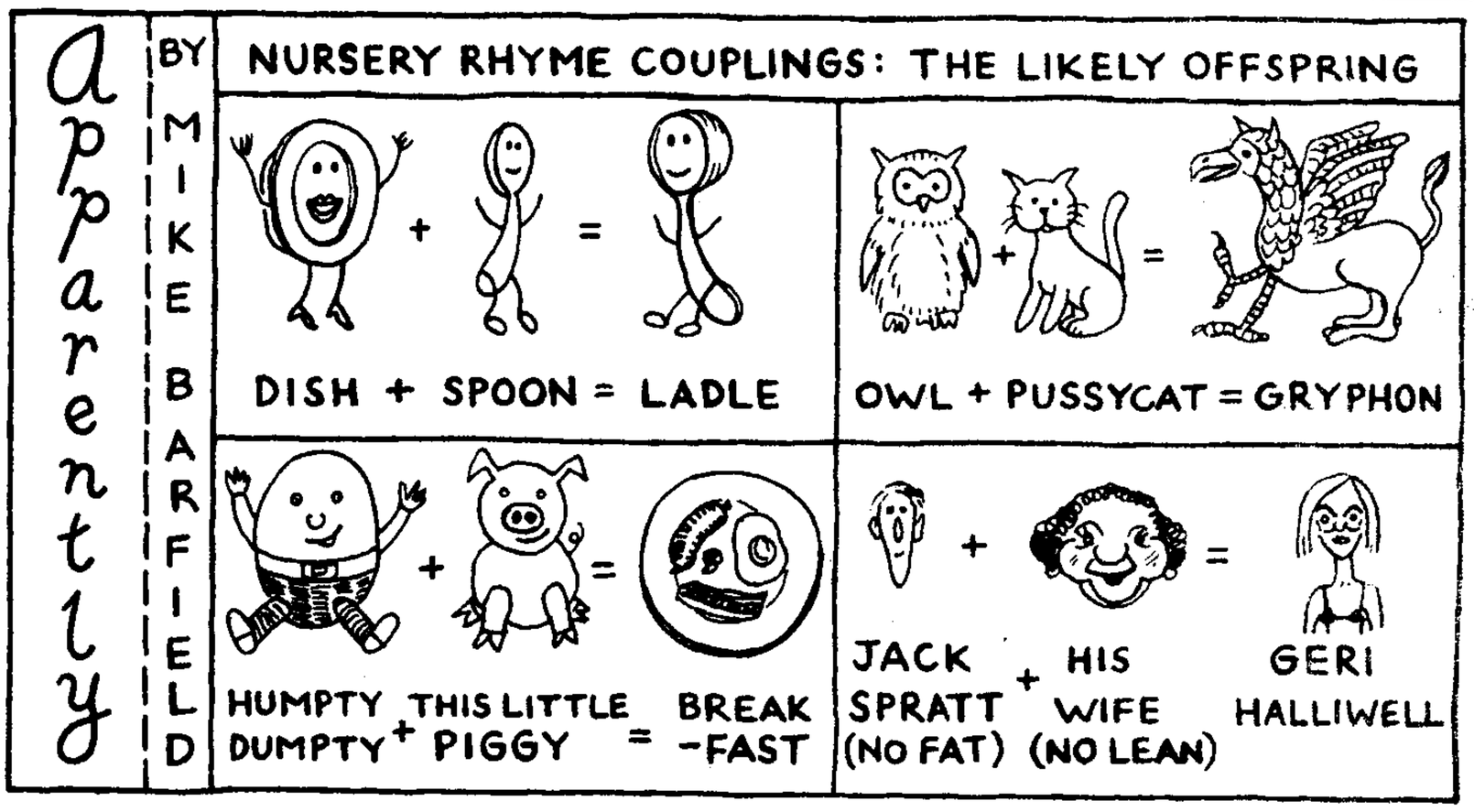
Because there was no law to prosecute them under, I had to let them go. But before I did, I made them sign an agreement saying 'We will not eat human flesh again, and will be punished next time, even though there is no law.' That should sort things out." (South China Morning Post, 5/5/02. Spotter: Liz Zass)

— ● —

● "There are a lot of lessons to be learnt here, and they're all really apparent," police spokesman Wes Bellmore told a press conference in Edmonton. "Firstly, don't try to cheat a roadside prostitute out of her fee. Secondly, don't attack her when she complains. And thirdly, if you're going to cheat, use an anonymous vehicle, not one with your company's name and telephone number painted on the side in letters six feet high."

Bellmore was speaking after a Canadian man's attempt to avoid paying a prostitute for her services had seriously backfired. "Witnesses reported hearing a lot of yelling and fighting coming from the truck. Eventually, a young woman jumped out, covered in blood, and ran to a nearby house, while the truck sped off. On investigation, it turned out that the woman was uninjured, and the blood came from a severed toe, which she had bitten off.

"It wasn't hard to locate the man, because his truck had his employer's name and address written on it in huge letters, and he was their only driver who'd just limped into hospital with a bleeding stump on one foot. Our investigators are trying to get his toe sewn back on. After that, we'll charge him with assault and theft of services." *(Reuters, 10/5/02. Spotter: David Krassner)*


apparently
BY MIKE BARFIELD
NURSERY RHYME COUPLINGS: THE LIKELY OFFSPRING
DISH + SPOON = LADLE
OWL + PUSSYCAT = GRYPHON
HUMPTY DUMPTY + THIS LITTLE PIGGY = BREAK-FAST
JACK SPRATT (NO FAT) + HIS WIFE (NO LEAN) = GERI HALLIWELL

ST ALBION PARISH NEWS

Incumbent: Rev. A.R.P. Blair MA (Oxon)

SPECIAL JUBILEE SOUVENIR EDITION

And a truly "royal" and "loyal" hullo to you all!

What a wonderful time we've all had over the last few days celebrating the Queen's Jubilee, haven't we?

When we were planning all these celebrations a few weeks ago, I decided that it would be a good idea for me to take a bit of a back seat and let someone else take their share of the limelight for a change, i.e. Her Majesty the Queen. And all credit to her for the way she gave it her best shot!

As someone who organised the very popular celebrations we had two years ago at the Millennium Tent, I know only too well how difficult it is to make a success of events like this!

So, good for Her Majesty, for the way it all seemed to go off quite well on the day!

A number of you (quite a lot in fact!) were kind enough to say that the real highlight of the festivities was the sermon I preached at our special Jubilee thanksgiving service, kindly sponsored by local businessman Mr Desmond, the proprietor of the Adult Entertainment Emporium above the chip shop in the alley off the High Street.

For any parishioners who may have been unable to be present at the service due to the traffic building up around the church car park thanks to Mr Birt's clever new one-way system, which unfortunately created a 10-mile tailback, I am very grateful to Mr Campbell for agreeing to find room for it in this newsletter!

Yours "in jubilation"

Tony

THE VICAR'S JUBILEE SERMON

June 5th 2002

Today, as you all know, is a very special day. A day on which we are paying tribute to a very special lady. A lady who embodies everything that we at St Albion's believe in, and everything that I personally have always stood for throughout my ministry in the parish.

Firstly, tradition. What do we mean by that? It means having the good sense to hold onto that which is valuable from the past, and not to indulge in change for its own sake.

Secondly, heritage. This means looking backwards, not forwards all the time, and preserving, or even conserving the values that have made this country what it is today.

We think of agreeable country houses full of servants, spacious lawns where venerable old gentlemen in Panama hats are playing croquet, and beyond that the verdant acres of the age-old English countryside, where gallant huntsmen and their ladies are pursuing the evil Ken Livingstone and his gang of left-wing saboteurs who are bent on overthrowing the benign forces of conservatism and all that we in England hold most dear. God bless you, ma'am. And now we sing our final hymn, God Save The Pound.

(At this point in his address, the Vicar was so overcome by the emotion of the occasion that he had to be helped out of the pulpit by Mr Campbell, who offered him a sparkling glass of Jubilee water. Regaining his composure, the Vicar continued as follows).

Thirdly, continuity. How important it is not to sever our links with what has gone before. Surely we can learn so much from the imperishable tapestry of our nation's history? Who would wish to dismantle our great institutions? The House of Lords, the United Kingdom, the Pound, these are bastions of all that we hold most dear, and that you, ma'am, have come to embody in your gracious Self. I say this not out of deference but out of a profound reverence for your royal person, ma'am, and for your enormous popularity with which I humbly wish to be associated at this joyful time. From my wife Cherie and I, I would only wish that you have, in the words of St Delboy of Peckham, a "luvvly Jublee". And now the choir will sing the anthem 'Zadok The Vicar'.

(At this point the Vicar had to be assisted from the building, so overwhelmed was he by an onion that had miraculously appeared in his hand).

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Advertisement

ANY JOB CONSIDERED!!!

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Spinning – Weaving – Leaking – Rubbishing – Mortgage Advice – Dogwalking – Samba Lessons

For all those tiresome little jobs you don't want to do yourself ring now for instant satisfaction. Any dirty work underaken.

SPECIAL RATES FOR VICARS!!

The Vicar's wife having the time of her life at the St Albion's Parish Street Party.

To Remember In Your Prayers

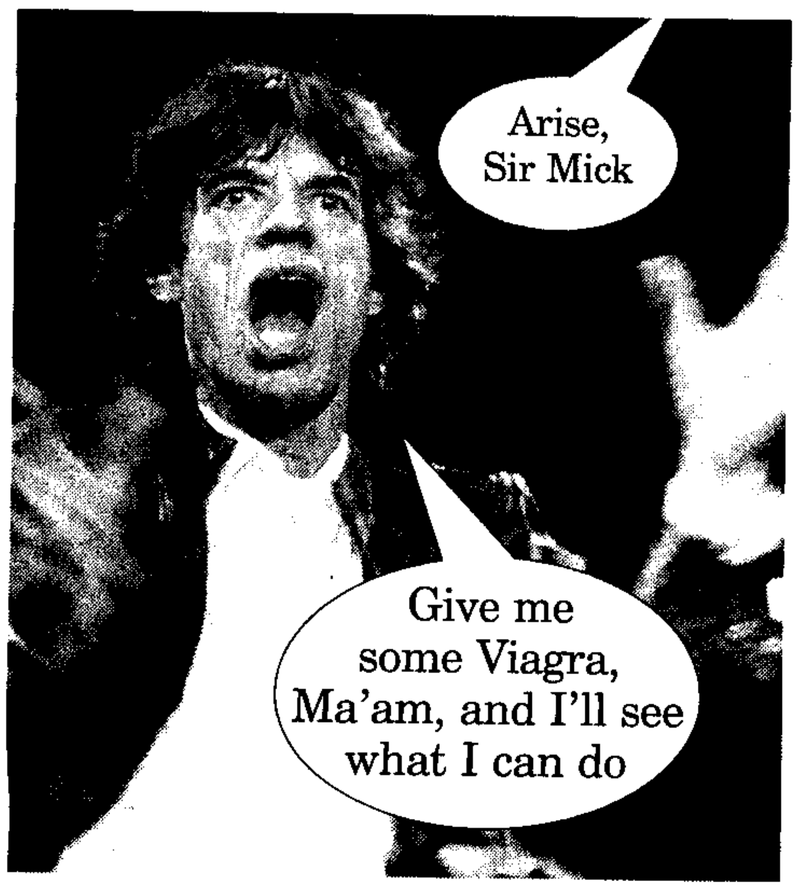
The poor victims of the terrible Rail Disaster at Paddington. And if you can remember anything else about them (incriminating personal details, etc), please let Mr Campbell know – in complete confidence, of course! T.B.

Salve et Valete!

WE ARE very sad to have to say farewell to Mr Byers, who has decided to be sacked after many years and long and faithful service to the Vicar. Mr Byers was the victim of a quite unscrupulous whispering campaign by everyone in the parish, suggesting that he was no good at his job. This was wholly unfair, even if true, which makes it all the more regrettable that Mr Byers was forced to let himself go. In place of Stephen, we welcome on board Mr Darling (and no 'hullo Darling' jokes, please), who we hope will be able to sort out the mess Mr Byers has been unjustly accused of making of our parish transport arrangements.

We are also particularly pleased to welcome Mr Boateng as the first member of the PCC from the ethnic communities. Not of course that this is why he has been appointed. But I do think it shows how far St Albion's has come, when it has a vicar who's got the guts to appoint a black person to the PCC for the first time in history! T.B.

Queen's Birthday Honours



DEAYTON TO BE KNIGHTED

by Sir Mick Shagger

CONTROVERSIAL philandering drug-taker Angus Deayton is to be knighted in the Queen's Birthday Honours, *writes Mick Shagger*.

Other top names to be honoured include Sir Kermit the Frog, Sir Oswald Osbourne, Sir Lennox Lewis and Lord Beckham of Posh (unless England lose to Nigeria and then the Prime Minister will cancel it).

Full story page 94.

Philip Norman, who was the Rolling Stones' biographer, said last night he thought the decison to award him a night-hood was a "disgrace".

The Times

MI5 PINPOINTS AL QAEDA TARGETS

by Our Intelligence Staff **I.Q. Low**

BRITAIN's intelligence services today revealed that after months of painstaking fieldwork and around-the-clock surveillance activities, they have discovered a complete list of possible Al Qaeda targets in the United Kingdom. Here is that MI5 list in full:

1. The Houses of Parliament

2. Buckingham Palace

3. Er...

4. The Twin Towers in New York

5. Er...

6. That's it.

News In Brief

NEW NAME FOR ACCOUNTANTS SHOCK

PRICEWATERHOUSECOOPERS has spent £75 million on a new name which embodies the future of the accountancy firm.

It is to be known as "Yesterday" and its employees will be known as "Yesterday's Men".

"It is a brilliant idea," said the company's rivals. "Yesterday is what PriceWaterhouse-Coopers is heading for."

MONDAY TO BE RENAMED PRICEWATER-HOUSECOOPERS

THE UNPOPULAR day of the week linking the weekend with Tuesday is to have a radical shake-up of its image, including being given a new name.

"Nobody likes Monday," said an image consultant. "You associate it with feeling depressed miserable. Well, from now on the day will be known as PriceWaterhouseCoopers."

The designers are hoping that in the future people will wake up with that PriceWaterhouse-Coopers morning feeling.

ACCOUNTANTS' CLIENTS TO BE RENAMED

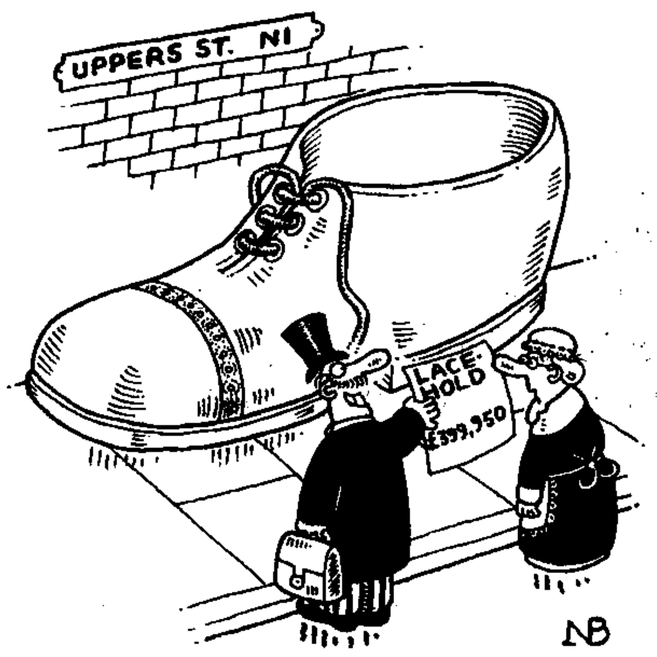
THE CLIENTS of top accountancy firm "Monday" (formerly PriceWaterhouse-Coopers) have been renamed "Suckers" after £75 million of their money was spent on a pointless and silly change of name.

MONDAY TO BE RENAMED SELLAFIELD

TOP ACCOUNTANTS Monday have decided to call themselves Consignia and *(That's enough stupid renaming. Ed.)*

"I can't even be bothered to vote for 'Big Brother' these days"

PRE-SCHOOL NURSERY RHYMES



There was an old woman who lived
in a shoe,
She wanted some decent affordable
accommodation in London –
So what else could she do?

SALLY JOCKSTRAP At the World Cup

Tokyo, Tuesday
Make no mistake, England United are going all the way! Pakistan never stood a chance as High Chapparal romped home at 40-1 to square the series.

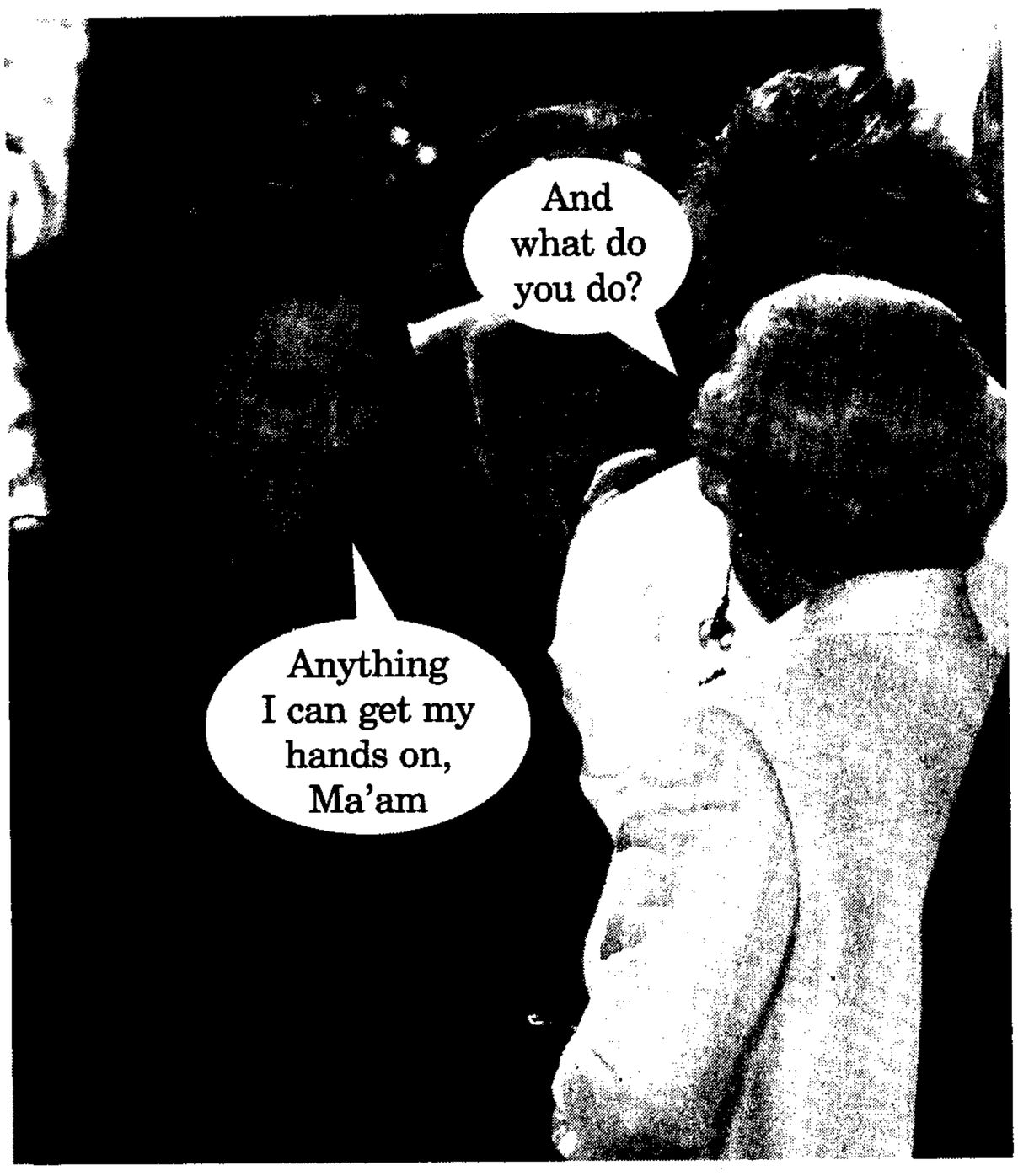
Seoul, Friday
What a turn up for the books! Michael Schumacher was a lonely figure as he trudged back to the pavillion after the umpire gave him a red card on the 18th hole. No wonder Mike Tyson is looking forward to the rematch.

Wembley, Saturday
What's happened to the England team? I know they've had problems with injuries, but you would think that at least one player could pull on a red shirt and turn out for the national side at this most famous of all stadiums. *(You're fired. Ed)*

ANNOUNCEMENT

THE DAILY MORON is delighted to announce that it will be putting up its cover price to 32p. This is in no way to be interpreted as a surrender in the so-called price war with our competitors, as it was never our intention to gain sales by selling cheap copies of our newspaper. On the contrary, it was always our strategy to lose a lot of money by cutting the cover price for a short period before panicking and putting the price back up to what it was before. Our competitors must be quaking in their boots as they contemplate putting on more sales and forcing us out of business.

Sir Victor Blankcheque,
The Daily Moron,
Wapping Losses,
Carey Street, London W1.



'QUEEN, THE MUSICAL' 50th Celebration

by Our Showbiz Staff **Phil Seats**

BEN ELTON today led the tributes as 'Queen, the Musical' reached a milestone few critics would have thought possible – fifty performances in the West End.

"This is an unprecedented achievement for a show this dire," said a clearly emotional Mr Elton, speaking after another matinee performance. "Long may the royalty cheques continue to rain down on me."

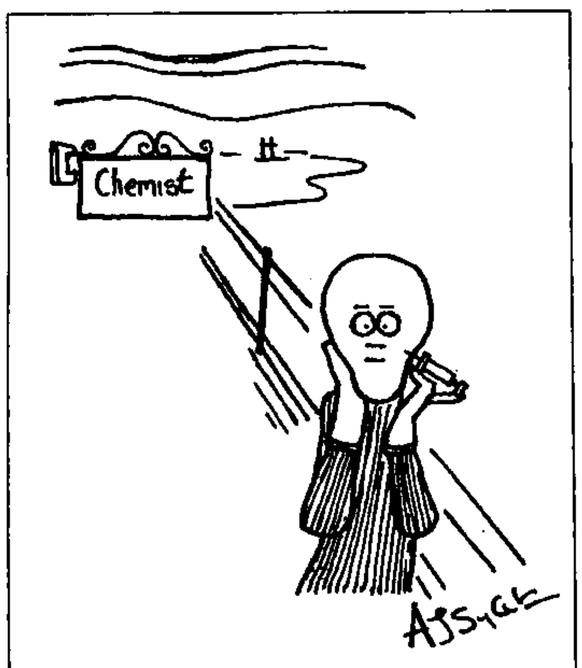
After Mr Elton's speech there were fireworks aplenty as disgruntled investors confronted him, demanding to know how soon it would be before "Queen, the Musical" was forced to step aside for yet another revival of The Rocky Horror Show.

ULSTER JOINS IN JUBILEE CELEBRATIONS

by Our Northern Ireland Correspondent **Belfast Mooney**

THE JUBILEE celebrations certainly went with a bang in Ulster last night with spectacular fireworks in many of Belfast's streets. All day there were traditional marches, with many of the volunteer groups represented, including the UVF and the IRA.

They were later joined by a large group of uniformed personnel representing the police force and then eventually a number of regiments of the armed forces joined in to provide a climax to a perfect *(cont. p. 94)*



Munch's Botox

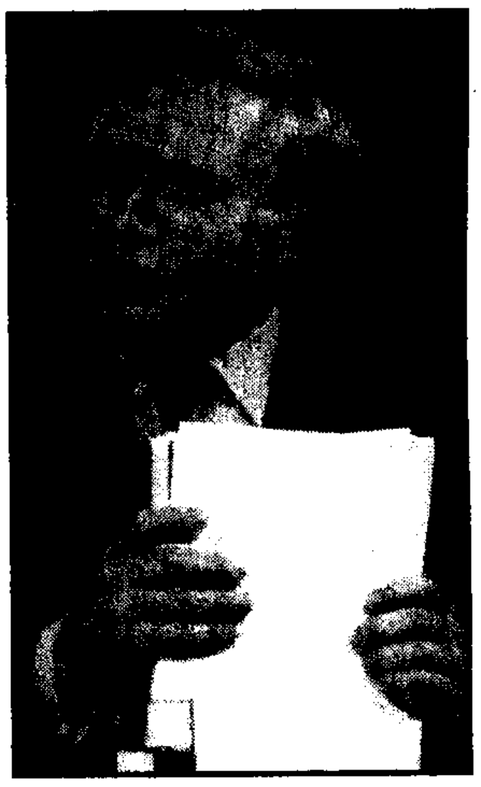
WHAT YOU DIDN'T MISS

BBC-1, Jubilee Tuesday, 12.30 – 6.50 pm

David Dimblebore *(for it is he)*: And still they come, the little floats that made Britain everything it is today. And coming down the Mall now are the Royal Women's Volunteer Corps of Dog Handlers. You can see the years of training that have gone into the handling of these dogs, many of them with four legs and tails held proudly aloft in honour of Her Majesty's 50 years on the throne.

And behind them, the Brigade of Queen's Own Lollipop Ladies, looking resplendent in their magnificent Dayglo uniforms, lollipops held proudly aloft. The lollipop lady was, of course, first introduced into Britain in 1969 by Barbara Castle.

(Historian in background: "I think you'll find it was Queen Victoria who was as we all know a great lover of lollipops…")



David Dimblebore… and still they come, and now a wonderful tableau representing life in Britain in the 1970s. There you see the flares, the kipper ties, the long flowing hair, the penny-farthing bicycles. And there's a young couple lying in bed smoking cannabis and watching The Sweeney on one of the tiny little black and white TV sets we had in those days…

(Historian: I think you'll find, David, that that was The Man From U.N.C.L.E., not The Sweeney.)

David Dimblebore: Well, the Duke of Edinburgh's certainly enjoying that, from the way he's sitting there with his eyes closed. I wonder what the Queen thinks?

Ah, and now representing the West End of the 1960s, the cast of the musical Twang!! Isn't that Barbara Windsor there…

(Historian: No, I think you'll find that's Princess Anne, or is it Alan Bennett?)

David Dimblebore: And now, what a wonderfully imaginative touch, the children of the Ronald Kray Primary School in Wood Green will release special Jubilee balloons in the shape of animals that they've been making under the supervision of their art mistress, Miss R. Sewell. Up they fly, there they go, red, blue, white, all the colours you could think of. A wonderful sight. I think that's a rabbit we can see, if the camera can get close enough, and there's a sausage dog, and there's another and another. Or perhaps in honour of the Queen they could be her favourite corgis?

And now the moment we've all been waiting for – the celebrity float carrying cardboard cut-outs of some of the best-loved celebrities who have entertained us all through the last 50 years. There's, er, Alan Titchmarsh, and isn't that Angela Rippon, and, er, that's Michael Fish, and Peter Snow with his legendary swingometer, swinging away in the sunshine. What wonderful memories they bring back!

And next we have a troupe of those colourful figures of modern London, familiar to all tourists, the sellers of the Big Issue. Many of them have given up their homes in other parts of the world to come here to London to serve the community. And there closing in on them are a splendid body of the Metropolitan Police, the much-loved London 'bobbies', as they present their truncheons and bring them down on the heads of those unfortunate visitors to our shores. I'm sure the young princes are enjoying that spectacle! And so is the Queen, by the way she is looking at her watch!

But now another high point, the massed fly-past of the entire Royal Air Force – no fewer than three aircraft, two of them dating back to the Second World War, as they scream in low overhead, at nearly 100 miles an hour…

(Dimblore continues in similar vein for several hours…)

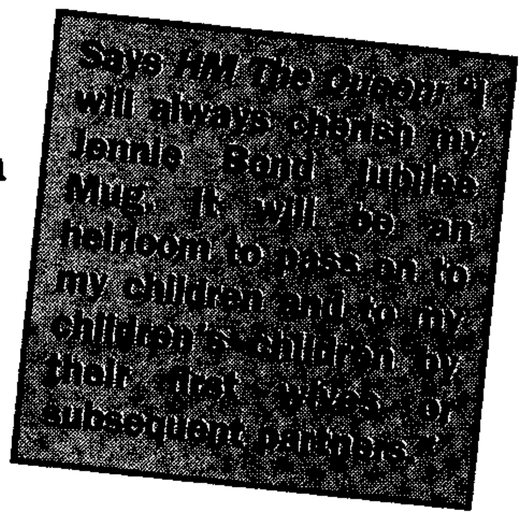
★★★★ New from Gnome ★★★★

THE ROYAL JUBILEE COMMEMORATIVE MUG

CELEBRATING 50 glorious hours of continuous public service broadcasting over the Jubilee Weekend this unique plastic-style mug depicts the nation's best-loved Royal Correspondent, Her Majesty the Queen of Broadcasting in familiar pose loyally doing a piece to camera when nothing much is going on and she has to fill five minutes.

This unique offer from Gnome commemorates a unique lifetime of service spent in selfless devotion to her Royal Duties.

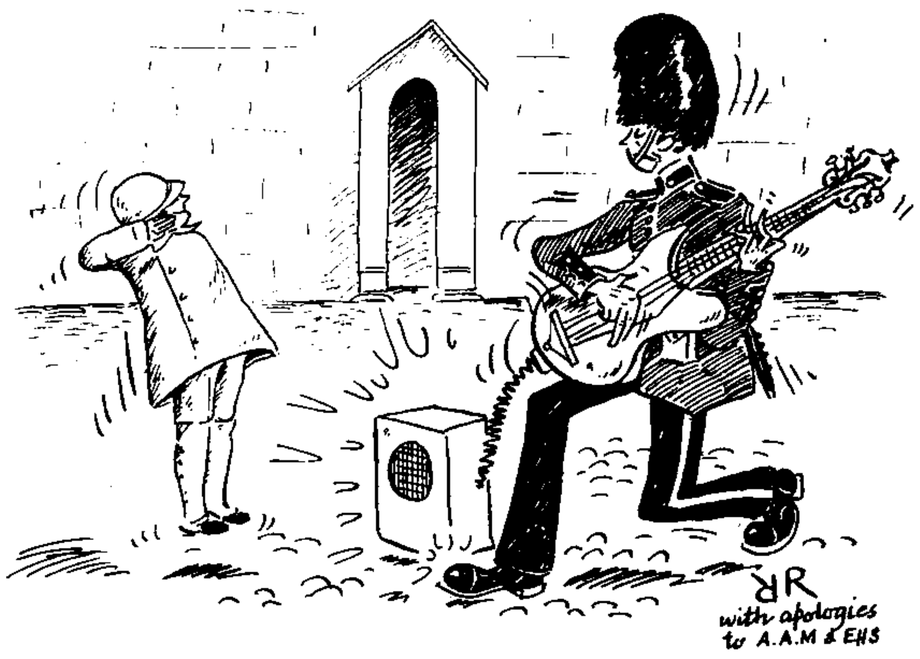
The mug has been lovingly hand-tooled by Traditional Plastic Injection Moulding Craftsmen and bears the patriotic legend, "Made in China".


Says HM The Queen "I will always cherish my Jennie Bond jubilee Mug. It will be an heirloom to pass on to my children and to my children's children by their first wives or subsequent partners."

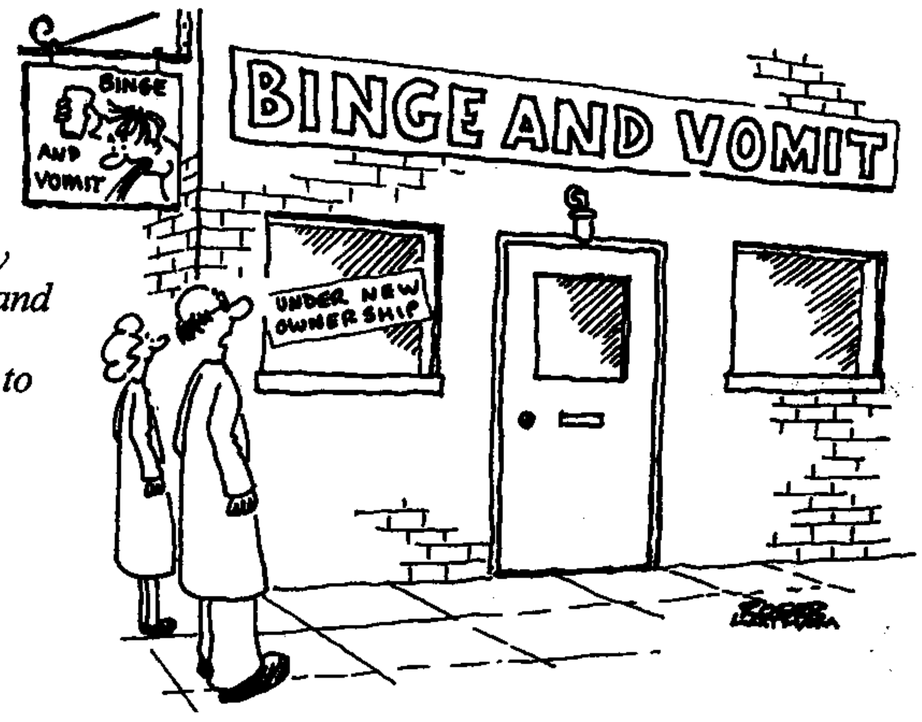
SEND **£773.99** (+p&p) NOW to avoid the disappointment of us having stacks of these left in the warehouse.

● **The Jennie Bond Mug Offer, GnomeTat plc, Unit 9C, The Trading Estate, Bracknell.**

PRE-SCHOOL NURSERY RHYMES



They're changing chords at Buckingham Palace,
Christopher Robin went down with Alice.
Alice is marrying one of the roadies,
"I believe the Queen is surrounded by toadies,"
Says Alice (Cooper).



"I suppose they thought 'Rose and Crown' didn't appeal enough to youngsters"

50 Glorious Years

By Charles Moore

Editor of the Daily Telegraph

I spent the day of the Queen's Golden Jubilee reading the journal written by my great grandfather, Sir Herbert Moore-Gussett, describing how he had marked the Queen's Coronation in 1953 by planting a commemorative oak tree on the village green. Here are his notes for the speech he made on that occasion to a large crowd of respectful villagers.

"Queen, jolly good chap... oak tree symbol of British greatness... Nelson's flagship... beating the foreigners... repeated by Winston in our generation... only language they understand... three cheers for Qu."

What a vivid glimpse this gives of happier times in a bygone age when everyone knew his place and the circulation of the Daily Telegraph was 10 million copies a day.

But we who have lived through these past 50 years can count ourselves fortunate in many respects. Certainly there are many things about the modern age which seem calculated to annoy us, such as when the cashpoint machine obstinately refuses to dispense the much-needed funds for the taxi to Canary Wharf. Or the ghastly names people use nowadays when they are trying to sell you a cup of coffee, such as "tall skinny latte with wings", the sort of cacophonous popular music one is forced to endure while being kept waiting to be connected on the telephone device.

All such infuriating irritations aside, we must nevertheless accept that life in Britain today is very comfortable. As I look about me at my agreeable home in the middle of rural Sussex, I cannot help thinking how much better off everyone is than they were 50 years ago. And I cannot forget that if I had been born 50 years earlier, I might well have fallen on Flanders field and would not have been able to write this article. This alone, I think, indicates just how grateful we should all be that Her Majesty the Queen is still on the throne.

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THE DAILY TELEGRAPH

I've Seen It All Before

by W.F. Deedes

THE first Golden Jubilee I remember covering was that of Queen Victoria in 1887. She was a small, dumpy figure dressed in black, but this did not *(Continued 1894)*

That Jubilee Lunch Menu in full

Brownnose
Windsor Soup
Tongue in Aslic
Groveldlax

– ❋ –

Toadie-In-The-Hole

– ❋ –

Creeps Suzettes

€ EURO

COUGH GETS SILENT

by Our Political Staff **Tixie Lix**

IN HIS most dramatic move since becoming Tory leader, Mr Iain Duncan Cough will remain silent on the subject of the euro.

Said top Tory aide Dominic Twytte, "This is an incredibly courageous move by Iain.

"He recognises that if he supports anything, people will vote the other way because he is so useless and unpopular."

Mr Twytte continued, "By remaining silent, Mr Cough hopes to persuade people to vote against the euro."

"Not of course that he's giving away his own position on the euro, because if he did that, people might vote the other way on principle, so he's kept it very quiet where he stands."

May Cause Intense Drowsiness

"And incidentally, could you please keep all this out of the papers, because it could make him look a bit of a prat, In fact, could you never mention him again."

Dominic Twytte is 23.

EXCLUSIVE TO ALL NEWSPAPERS

MAN KICKS BALL

THE ENTIRE world held its breath last night as a man kicked a ball.

Amazed onlookers were left open-mouthed when the ball that the man kicked went into a net. "We haven't seen anything like this", said one expert, "since this morning."

On other pages

- That Man – In- Depth Profile **2,3,4,5**
- That Kick – Amazing Pix **6,7,8,9**
- How The Man Kicking the Ball Touches All Our Lives – Editorial **10**
- What Happens When a Man Kicks a Ball, Dr Stuttaford writes **11**
- Nuclear War Breaks Out on Subcontinent **94**

EXCLUSIVE TO ALL PAPERS

COMMEMORATIVE EDITION

TO MARK the special occasion of it not being some kind of royal event, your regular Royal eight-page supplement comes with a special pull-out-and-keep 'souvenir newspaper'.

Featuring rare items called 'news' and 'stories', this collectors' edition is something for you to keep and treasure for ever, so you can look back and remember the time when newspapers ran something other than huge pictures of the Royal *(cont. p.94)*

Alternative Rocky Horror Service Book

Service To Be Used During The Staging Of A World Cup Football Match

President: We are not gathered here today, because we've all stayed at home to watch the match on television.

No One: Amen.

(The President shall here run as fast as he can to the Vicarage to ascertain the score)

EXCLUSIVE FOR THE GOLDEN JUBILEE

The Royal Orb Large Display Rocket

RRP £25

ONLY £29.99

Mosley warehouse advertisement

ME AND MY SPOON

THIS WEEK

MAX HASTINGS

Now that you've given up being the editor of the Evening Standard, do you find you have more time to devote to things such as spoons?

I certainly have more time for a whole lot of things I enjoy. Fishing. Shooting. Fishing. There's nothing I enjoy more than standing up to my waist in a fast-flowing trout stream like the Test or the Itchen…

I'm sorry to bring you back to spoons. Would they have any part in your shooting and fishing?

That's a bloody stupid question, if I may say so. When trying to land a 20lb salmon, a spoon is the very last thing you'd think about.

You've also written a number of books about the war. Do you remember any part that was played by spoons in those events?

I don't know if you've actually read any of my books, but if you had, I think you'd realise what a bloody silly question that is.

But surely, every soldier would have carried a spoon in his knapsack?

He may have done. But I have to say there are rather more important issues at stake in a great battle than whether or not Tommy Atkins has got a spoon in his kitbag.

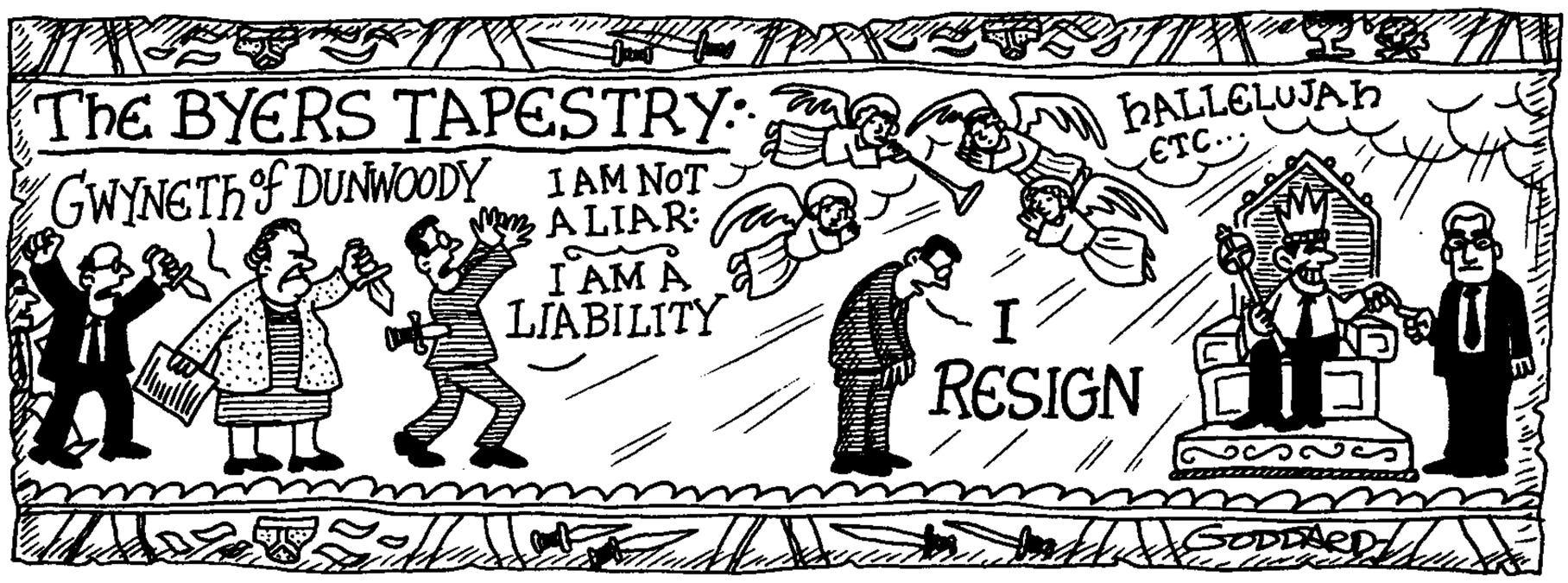
So that's another silly question is it?

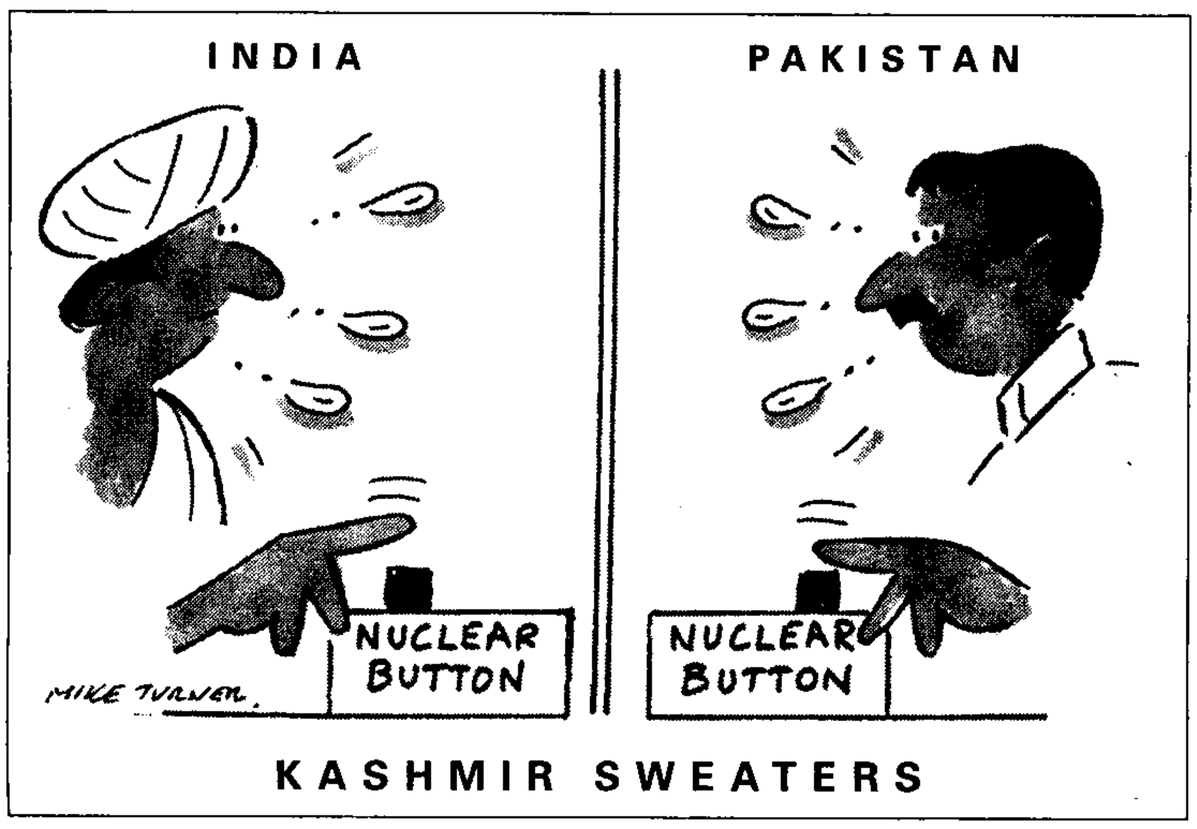
You've taken the words right out of my – hang on a tick, I've just seen a pheasant out of the window asking to be shot. I know it's out of season, but I'm not having him digging up my nasturtiums. BANG. And if you put that in your damn fool interview I'll shoot you as well. And while you're asking about my new book, it's called The Art of Leadership With Rod and Gun, available in all good bookshops at £45.

Has anything amusing ever happened to you in connection with a spoon?

That's another bloody idiotic question.

NEXT WEEK: Simon Schama – *"Me And My Corkscrew."*





Rigorous New Tests for St Cake's Entry

End to 'Putting Down At Birth'

By Our Education Staff **Cilla Blackboard and Lynda Chalk**

IN THE biggest revolution in its 450-year history, St Cake's, the exclusive West Midlands School, is to introduce new "entrance tests" to ensure that all would-be pupils have an equal chance of gaining entry to the school.

Said headmaster Mr Kipling, "It will no longer be possible for Old Cakeians to put their sons down at birth and be assured of a place."

Frightfully Common Entrance

Under the new system, all prospective entrants to the school will have to sit a series of special new IQ-based tests.

Sample questions might include the following:

St Cake's Entrance.
Time allowed: 5 minutes.

Verbal Reasoning

1. Fill in the words missing from the following sentence.
My parents are . . .
A. Quite well off ☐
B. Very very rich ☐
C. Living abroad for tax purposes ☐
2. If the fees at a well-known boarding school are £20,000 a term, will your father . . .
A. Pay but complain under his breath as he does so? ☐
B. Pay and not notice? ☐
C. Pay a bit extra to ensure that you get in? ☐
3. That's it.

"Are you Asylum Seekers or Economic Migrants?"

GM PROGRAMME 'OUT OF CONTROL'

by our Media Staff **Frank Enstein**

A GENETICALLY-modified television programme has been let loose on the public this week, leading to calls for tighter regulations on all docu-dramas.

Scientists are horrified by the GM programme known technically as "Fields of Gold" and are accusing the creators of the docu-drama of "playing God by dabbling in areas which they know nothing about".

Said one leading specialist, "They have produced material that looks like a normal television melodrama but which has been subtly altered to include a deadly strain of Guardian editorials."

Rubbisher

He continued, "If this version of the GM story reaches the airwaves, then it could infect everyone and create monstrous misconceptions about *(cont. p. 94)*

FAYED TO CLOSE

By Our Media Correspondent
Mr Punch

LONG-running humorous businessman Mohamed al Fayed finally admitted defeat last night, bringing to an end a comic institution that has kept the nation laughing since the 1980s.

Curate's Bad Egg

In its heyday, Fayed produced classic jokes such as Tenniel's "Dropping the Piles of Money", Pont's "The British Passport" and H.M. Bateman's "The Man Who Liked Fayed". It was also responsible for long-running features such as "Let's Fuggin Parler Fuggin' Fugglais".

However in recent years Fayed has become lacklustre and has lost most of its audience.

"Fayed just isn't as funny as it used to be," said one media commentator. "Often I would look at Fayed in the dentist's waiting room and barely raise a smile.

"It's probably time to call it a day. Punch is much better off without him."

POETRY CORNER

Punch, a magazine (1841-1992; 1996-2002)

So. Farewell then
Punch.

After six years
You have
Died
For the
Second time.

What will they put
On your gravestone?

"Not dead but
Only sleeping."

Like your readers.

All six of
Them.

E.J. Thribb (£17½ million down the drain)

Punch table acquires latest set of initials

QUEEN TO SING AT McCARTNEY WEDDING

by Our Musical Staff **Sir John Peel**

HER Majesty the Queen has agreed to play at the Royal Wedding of Sir Paul of McCartney and his beautiful bride Heather Millions.

The Queen will serenade the Royal couple with an amusing amended version of one of her greatest loved hits, "God Save The Queen".

She will accompany herself on acoustic ukelele and sing the words, "God Save Sir Paul" as a tribute to his fifty years as King of Pop Music.

Said Sir Paul, "It is a great honour for Her Majesty to appear at a really important global event and it will do her record sales no end of *(Cont. p. 94)*

THE WOMAN THE GOVERNMENT TRIED TO SMEAR

by Our Political Staff **Germaine Smeer**

AN ELDERLY woman who has led a campaign against the government's transport policy claimed that she has been the victim of a dirty tricks campaign.

Mrs Gwyneth Dunwoody, 85, alleges that government advisors have been sending out e-mails looking for "dirt" with which to discredit her.

One email is said to read, "Can you see what you can dig up on this Dunwoody woman? We have heard she is a member of the Labour Party."

In reply, a researcher at Millbank is meant to have replied, "We have looked into her and we have reliable information that she is a well-known Labour supporter. She may even be a Member of Parliament. We've got a lot of people working on this and will definitely link her to this unpleasant organisation."

The Transport Department later issued an apology for the email. Said Mr Alistair Darling, "The email was ill-judged and unfortunate. It should have been a phone call and then no one would have known anything about it. We're very sorry that we have been caught out again."

Lord Birt is 75.

Wedding of the Century

How They Are Related

Paul McCartney

King Macca
|
Big Macca
|
Mac The Nice
|
John Paul II
|
Lord Dull of Kintyre
|
Rembrandt

Heather Mills

Queen Eleanor of Rigby
|
Mrs Mills (and her piano)
|
Hayley Mills
|
Sir John Mills
|
Mills and Boon
|
Lucky Heather

EYE HOTLINE

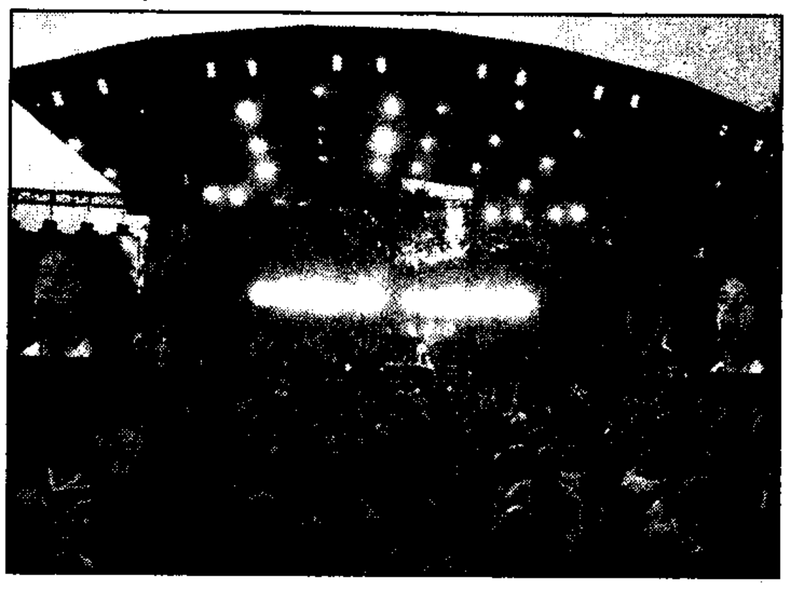
This is your chance to name Red Ken's lovechild and win a 3rd generation mobile with full-colour "smiley" feature. Choose from the following:

BOY	GIRL
Red	**Redina**
Ken	**Kennella**
Karl	**Karlotta**
Che	**Che-rie**
Fidel	**Fidelia**
Ho Chi Minh	**Miss Saigon**
Gerry Adams	**Bernardette Devlin**
Newt	**Sal Amanda**

Phone now on the "Red Ken Hotline" 08942 6413 (calls cost £2.50 a minute) and make your views known to London's Mr Big.

Picasso Matisse
TATE MODERN
YOU MUST REMEMBER THAT COSMETIC SURGERY WAS IN ITS INFANCY
I UNDERSTAND SHE WAS ONE OF PICASSO's MODELS
JUST BECAUSE I DON'T LIKE, CUBISM DOESN'T MEAN YOU CAN CALL ME A SQUARE!
I WONDER WHAT DIET SHE WAS ON?
NOT MANY ARTISTS COULD AFFORD A GARRET NOWADAYS. THE GOING PRICE OF A GARRET IN LONDON IS ABOUT 500K
IMAGINE IF YOU COULD PAINT LIKE THAT NOWADAYS, YOU WOULDN'T EVEN BE SHORTLISTED FOR THE TURNER PRIZE
I SEE THEY HAD AEROBICS IN THOSE DAYS AS WELL
NICE WAS NICE THEN. IT'S NOT SO NICE NOW
WHAT DO YOU KNOW! YOU'RE JUST A PRICK CARTOONIST
I DON'T KNOW MUCH ABOUT ART, BUT I NOW KNOW ABOUT QUEUEING
12:20 TUES NEXT
WE'VE BEEN LINED UP HERE SO LONG, WE SHOULD QUALIFY FOR AN INSTALLATION PRIZE!
I TOLD THE OFFICE THAT I WAS GOING TO WATCH THE WORLD CUP
HI! YOU HAVE REACHED MANDY FOR HOT PHONE SEX! TALK DIRTY TO ME!
I'D RATHER HAVE SEEN TYSON v LENNOX
BUGGER! MY BACK'S GONE AGAIN!
TATE MOD SHOP
YOU DON'T SELL ANY OF THEIR D.N.A DO YOU?

DIARY



PARTY AT THE PALACE

Lenny Henry: Wooh! Wooh! Yeahawrigh! Wooh! Teyawor, I'm HUMUNGOUSLY excited to be here on this HUMUNGOUSLY exciting day!!!! Blimey – just think – Buckingham Palace – not yer average council house, is it, eh?!!!!!! Whoops – I'll prob'ly be EXECUTED for saying that!!!!

Enjoying yourself so far, are you!?! Yeah! I've had a great day so far! What about you? Enjoying yourself so far?! Yeah! Nice place they've got here! Whoops!

But have we got a show for you today!! Atomic KITTEN, everybody! Bluuuuuue!! Emma Bunnnnnnton!!! YEAH! And the humoungously HUMUNGOUS Queeeeeen!!!!! But first, please go CRAZEEEE for S CLUB 7!!!!!!!

S Club 7: Doast arpmoo vinn
Tover farnkyfarnky bee!
Doast arpmoo vinn
Tover farnkyfarnky bee!

Lenny Henry: Yeah? Howsitgointhen? Enjoying yourself so far, are you? Are you? I said, AAAAAARE YOOOOOOOU? I've had a great day so far – and I'm BLACK!!!!!! Now let's pay tribute to those HUMUNGOUSLY HUGE voices that made up the LEGENDARY sound of MOTOWN – Ladies and Gentleman, Emma Bunton IS The Supremes!!!!

Emma Bunton: babylovemybabylove
babylovemybabylove
babylovemybabylove
babylovemybabylove
thank you

Ben Elton: Emma Bunton, liezungennelmun! Awesome! A truly awesome performance there! What a totally awesome and extraordinarily scarifying performance, liezungennelmun – conveying the truly awesome PAR OF ROCK!! What about that foobaw, then, eh?? Talk about foobaw!! It's not just BLOKES kickin' a ball about – oh no! BURPY-FART! There – said it! NERDY-GIT-FARTY-PIG! Way-hey – bit CLOSE TO THE EDGE there, eh? EH? Too far – whaddya think?!! Heads-off time for Uncle Ben, eh?! EH?!

Fifty years, liezungennulmun, it's about fifty years of nashnaw unity, fifty years of a truly awesome and noble lady resplendent on her throne, fifty years of CUTTING EDGE HUMOUR, liezungennulmun! FARTY-PANTS! Wooh! WEE-WEE! TOILET! BIGGIES! PUBIC HAIR! Yes indeedy!!! And now, it is my deepest and most honoured privilege to introduce a truly awesome legend of international music – put your hands together for the truly legendary – Dame Shirley Bassey!!!!

Shirley Bassey:
growlfingAAAAAAAAARRRGH!
growlfingAAAAAAAAARRRGH!
growlfingAAAAAAAAARRRGH!
growlfingAAAAAAAAARRRGH!

Ben Elton: What a truly magnificent and awesome voice, liezungennulmun, wunnerful party, moment of national unity, wunnerful party, we bow down to Her Maj, whoops, went a bit far there, just calling her Her Maj, not Her Majesty – bit close to the bone! – but truly, what an amazing fifty years of truly awesome and dignified public service, liezungennulmun.

TURDY-BIGGY-BOBS!!! Yes indeedy! Let no-one tell me I've lost my social bite! And talkin' of social bite – what about those nibbles you get at parties – has the caviare they serve these days gone downhill or what? It's more like DOGGY-DOS!!

Seriously though, it is now my privilege to humbly introduce what must be the most truly awesome music ever written in the history of the universe ever. Liezungennulmun, please kneel down and worship the PAR OF ROCK – the ROCK FORCE that is the MIGHTY QUEEN!

First old man with weedy voice who isn't Freddie Mercury: we will we will rock you
we will we will rock you
we will we will rock you

Second old man with weedy voice who isn't Freddie Mercury: galley leo galley leo
i will not let you go let me
go i will not let you go let
me go i will not let you go

Ruby Wax: Um. It's um. Wonderful to. Um. Be here.

Kermit the Frog: Yes, it sure is wonderful to be here!

Ruby Wax: Yes. It sure is. I mean, it sure is wonderful – to be here. Really um. Wonderful!

Kermit the Frog: Have you said all you want to say, Ruby?

Ruby Wax: I'm American! We're both American! You and I – we're American! And – whaddyaknow! – this is England! Hey – that's funny!!!!!

Kermit the Frog: Is that it, Ruby?

Ruby Wax: Um. It's wonderful. To. Be here. Um. And now – um – okay – um – um, yes, I'm American! What am I doing here?! Um. I think we're now ready for, um – excuse me, but are we rea -

Tom Jones: Sex bum, sex bum
You're my sex bum
Sex bum, sex bum
You're my sex bum

Asian Mother 1: I am not funny, you stupid cow! Not funny at all!

Asian Mother 2: But I am less funny than you, you stupid cow! I am tip-top not funny!

Asian Mother 1: Not true! Tip-top! I am so unfunny, you stupid cow, that I am less funny than the least funny person here tonight!

Asian Mother 2: Ah, tip-top, but that's as maybe. I am so unfunny that the only reason people laugh at me, you stupid cow, is that they feel sorry for me!

Asian Mothers 1&2: So let's welcome the fantastic Sir Elton John!

Sir Elton John: Ar won lurv, buzz impassible
But ar won lurv, ar won lurv
Ar won lurv, but ar won lurv
Buzz impassible but ar won lurv

Lenny Henry: Wooh! Yeah! Let's rock! Howsitgointhen? Humungous! Are you havin' a good time? Wooh!

As told to
CRAIG BROWN

OH, YEAH. THERE WERE DISCUSSIONS ABOUT MY PERFORMING AT THE JUBILEE CONCERT AT BUCK HOUSE, BARRY.
YEAH?
AT ONE TIME IT LOOKED LIKE A DEFINITE POSSIBILITY THAT I'D BE ABLE TO DO IT...
GREAT!
BUT I HAD TO SEND MY APOLOGIES.
FOR YOUR BEHAVIOUR AT THAT PALACE GARDEN PARTY A FEW YEARS BACK?
YEAH. IT WASN'T ENOUGH THOUGH. SHE STILL WON'T HAVE ME BACK...

Literary Review

Popular friction

Faceless
Martina Cole
(Headline, £6.99)

Q: What is a popular novel? Well, the above item entered the paperback fiction best-seller charts at Number One and sold twenty thousand copies last week.

In terms of popular culture, if there is still such a thing, *Faceless* exists at the very bottom of a ladder whose summit is graced by *East-Enders*, and to whose middle regions precariously cling such artefacts as *Lock, Stock and Two Smoking Barrels*. Which is to say that it comes crammed with slags, cons, gangsters, dope-fiends and burly matriarchs from Silvertown upbraiding their delinquent tinies along the lines of "You got yourself into this and you can get yourself out of it... What have I got to show for all my kids and all my life, eh? Nothing. No fucking thing."

Marie Carter, its hard-as-nails, um, heroine, has just come out of chokey after a decade or so banged up for pulping two of her drug-addicted fellow prostitutes with a baseball bat. Unsurprisingly, her reemergence into polite society has an incalculable effect on the circles in which she once moved: mum and dad, natch (mum fucking 'ates her, dad ain't so sure); the families of her two dead associates; her ex-pimp, now a big-time drugs dealer busily corrupting her daughter Tiffany...

As you might expect, it all starts to get a little out of hand... It gets a little out of hand when one of the murder victims' cousins goes for Marie with a knuckle-duster, goes on to get further out of hand when the Carters' house is petrol-bombed by the same proud seeker for justice, and then settles comfortably down into a routinely observed stream of maimings, coshings, knifings and shootings. Meanwhile, the fictional backdrop against which all these high jinks are so painstakingly outlined is of the kind where eyes are keenly raised and corridors dimly-lit, pints are slowly sipped and people need answers and they need them now.

Characterisation? Well, let's just say that Joey Carr was "big, fat and ugly. . . He was a self-made man with no scruples, no feelings and no morals"; or that Patrick Connor was "black. Black, handsome, and rich." Although – hang on – he does have enormous biceps and blue eyes.

All this, not to mention the effervescent cockernee slang ("lump" = time spent in prison; "hag" = aggravation; "brass" = (I think) prostitute) would be hilarious, were it not for the faint, extraordinary sense of vaguely *aesthetic* purpose stirring many fathoms beneath the serial bloodbaths.

George Orwell observes somewhere that any piece of writing above the level of a railway timetable has its own style, its own private literary agenda. So, oddly enough, does *Faceless*. For a start, Ms Cole has a little stash of favourite upper-brow words – "epithet", for example, turns up more than once. Then again, she has a sententious streak ("Children were unlucky really. They were born without any say in things whatsoever") and above all a habit of letting characters turn aside from their usual barbarous locutions to become suddenly oracular, to inform one another that "You are bringing up a small child in this atmosphere of sexual tension and violence" or, without warning, cast aside their usual apostrophes to announce that "I am plagued by the lot of you" or that "I am off down the fucking pub for a pint and a pie."

The moral code, of course, derives from that blasted ethical heath on which the Kray twins met up with the Old Testament. "You have the creds and I have to give you the respect due." Don't grass up your mates. Family come first. Firebomb my house, you slag, and I'll stick my shot-gun up your Jacksy.

The curious thing is that, having scrolled down the 600-plus pages on offer here, one wouldn't dream of patronising its author in the way that one would some chick-fic queen or moonlighting celebrity. Rather like Josephine Cox, another of these immensely successful meat-and-two-veg crowd pleasers (Ms Cox specialises in North Country sagas) she is simply a perfectly ordinary non-literary person who, ungoaded by agents and publishers, decided to write about what she knows. The result is, of course, quite horrible. But it is also – unlike 95 percent of the stuff that gets written these days – horribly authentic.

Books & Bookmen

■ READERS of the *Evening Standard* books pages were recently presented with the harrowing story of Stephanie Merritt, Robert McCrum's deputy at the *Observer*, who had been abandoned by her boyfriend, the comedian Graham Fellowes (aka John Shuttleworth), midway through her pregnancy.

The feature by Liz Jones gave every sorry detail of the whole affair. But what inspired Merritt to tell her tale of woe at such length? A need to highlight the plight of single mothers? A cry for help aimed at Fellowes? Er, up to a point. As became clear at the end of the piece, it was just a puff for her debut novel *Gaveston*.

■ SO, why has Peter "Eeyore" Straus gone over to the dark side, leaving Picador in its 30th anniversary year to become an agent with Rogers, Coleridge and White, as well as joining the company's board?

In the official handout Straus talked of the usual "new challenges" and that the "opportunities offered me by Rogers, Coleridge & White are irresistible". And what opportunities would those be? Well, Deborah Rogers, Gill Coleridge and Pat White are all getting close to an age where one thinks of easing up slightly. By the time that they do, Straus will have his feet firmly under the table and will probably end up running the show.

No wonder the best efforts of Macmillan md David North to talk Straus out of the move came to nothing.

In addition, the chance to frighten seven shades out of Caradoc King of AP Watt, who moved Graham Swift and his backlist from Straus's imprint to Penguin in a rather greedy and unethical way earlier this year, is unlikely to have been sniffed at. Presumably King's clients can expect mischievous lunch invitations from Straus in due course.

■ JAMIE BYNG, head of the trendy independent Edinburgh-based publisher Canongate, denied to the *Scotsman* that the break-up of his marriage and his ex-wife's move to London had any ramifications for the company. However, many at the firm are still worried Byng may well up sticks and take the whole operation to London, leaving them jobless.

"We have no plans to move from Edinburgh," he said. "I'm regularly asked by people when we are going to move from Edinburgh as if it is an inevitability, but it is not one and we remain happy to be based in Scotland." That's the official version; but some have suggested that it is an "open secret" among the upper echelons of Byng's 15 staff that the move is on for next spring.

Aside from the obvious desire to be near his two children, his ex-wife's father is the company's primary financial backer. But it is hard to see what good a move to the English capital would do the company. It has made much of its proud outsider status, and although Byng has done a lot to make the company hip, it retains a strong list of traditional Scottish writers, who might baulk at being published from London.

■ ALTHOUGH it should be good news for booklovers to hear that publishers and booksellers will be working together more closely, the recent report in the *Bookseller* that US giant Borders is to enlist publishers to advise on which titles to stock, based on reader feedback, has an ominous edge.

The publishers – Random House and HarperCollins are already on board – get an unprecedented say on how Borders displays its titles and how much it discounts them. Apart from the fact that it seems to represent a cartel by any other name, readers will, inevitably, refer back to what they've read recently and ask for more of the same. Given that this is what major publishers are geared to churning out anyway, one wonders why a focus group is needed.

At a stroke the chances of slow-burn bestsellers, offbeat writing or anything remotely challenging coming to the fore are reduced massively in favour of the usual run of homogenised and formulaic mass-market blockbusters. When will publishers realise the secret is not giving the public what it wants, but trying to give it something it might not have realised it wanted?

'Bookworm'

SNIPCOCK & TWEED
I CAN'T BEAR TO WATCH! IS HE GOING TO DO IT?!
ENGLAND
YEEESSS!!
SOMEONE'S BOUGHT OUR WORLD CUP BOOK!!
ANOTHER WORLD CUP GUIDE

Edna Average

In the Forest
Edna O'Brien
(Weidenfeld & Nicolson, £16.99)

VIEWERS of last week's *Omnibus* on BBC2 witnessed an almost tearful Edna O'Brien paying her respects, or at any rate a visit, to a little shrine in a rural Irish wood. Two crosses marked the spot where in 1994 a young woman and her three-year-old child were brutally murdered and buried in a shallow grave.

In the "author's note" to this novelisation of the case, O'Brien briefly recounts the facts, using the real names of the three victims (a young priest was also murdered) and their psychopathic killer. Her summary is a model of clarity and concision. Sadly, the rest of the book is not nearly so good. Having established its bogus "true crime" connection, O'Brien, who sees herself as a "psychic and moral historian" of her country, plays fast and loose with such facts as she evidently took the trouble to research and offers instead a gothic melodrama with a moralising undertow.

Short chapters, mostly in a breathless present tense, tell the story in the voices of a huge cast of characters, few of whom are more than ciphers. By turns whimsical, gossipy, fearful, brutal, cynical and incompetent, they represent not so much the real community from whom they are supposedly drawn, as elements of an author's construct chosen to illustrate a point. Their collective failure to act sooner, as the omens pile up one by one, is easy enough to see in retrospect of course.

O'Brien shies away from giving too much space to either the principal victim, Eily Ryan (originally Imelda Riney) or the perpetrator, Michen O'Kane (Brendan O'Donnell); nor does she describe in detail the actual rape and killings, though their horrific nature is made clear enough elsewhere. But in building up to the murders and their aftermath in the way she does, exploiting the conventions of genre fiction to generate mounting tension and horror, she reveals the perversity of her motive. Since the reader already knows the outcome, the satisfaction offered cannot be the thrill of the cliffhanger or the hope of last-page rescue, but only the frisson of voyeuristic sadomasochism: in the current buzzphrase, the pornography of torture.

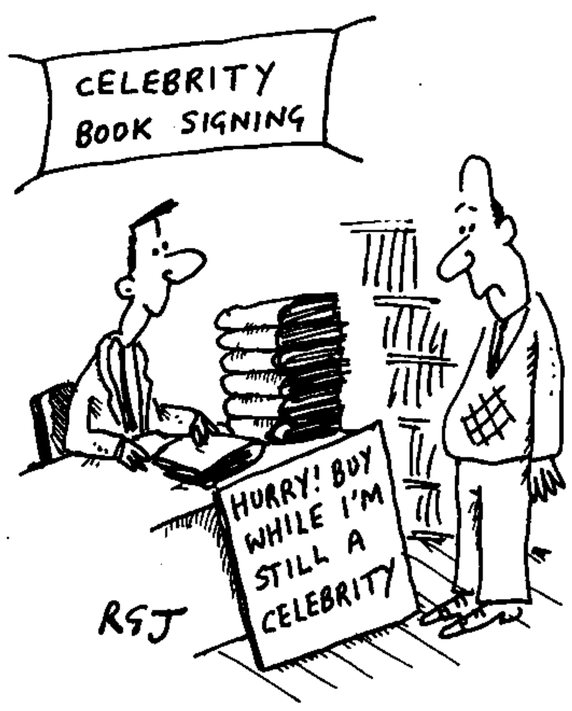
So why did she do it? The obvious explanation is that O'Brien, rather like Emma Tennant with her lurid retelling of the Plath/Hughes saga, *The Ballad of Sylvia and Ted* (see *Eye* 1031), has simply run out of original ideas for her fiction. Both call to mind those ghoulish old crones who pick over the corpses on the battlefield for saleable trinkets and keepsakes. Both have a penchant for overstretched syntax and lurid romantic excess.

But while Emma is simply boiling her pot, Edna has a hidden agenda. It runs through most of her work, ever since her banned (publicly burned) first novel, *The Country Girls*. Like her hero James Joyce she is an exile, and like Imelda Riney (the comparison is explicitly made in the *Omnibus* puff) she is a victim. While this is not the first of her books to cause a stir, neither is it the first to feature a real life controversy: *Down By The River* (1996) recalls the Irish court battle over a pregnant 14-year-old alleged rape victim who sought an abortion in England.

Thus *In the Forest* is not just a sensational retelling of a notorious scandal. It is yet another round in that long-running fight, O'Brien vs Ireland. In the red-haired corner, free-loving Irish womanhood, oppressed, priest-ridden, abused. In the blue, the conservative, patriarchal, book-banning, secret-keeping old Irish mindset.

On this reading, Imelda & Co were victims not of a wicked psychopath so much as of an oppressive system or way of life. So, for that matter, was O'Donnell. In fact the aspect of the book which seems to have most offended is the sympathy and understanding O'Brien appears to show for the perpetrator.

She denies using the tragedy for personal gain; but she cannot deny the windfall of free publicity the controversy has generated. It was a nice gesture, then, to dedicate the book to Imelda and her fellow murder victims.



WHAT YOU DIDN'T MISS, Pt 94. . .

Rosamond Lehmann
Selina Hastings
(Chatto & Windus, £25)

. . .As spring gave way to summer there were more opportunities to spend time away from Poshleigh Grange. Not only were there delicious days in Suffolk – stalking poor people through the ancestral heather, riding on gun-limbers dragged by obsequious gamekeepers – but also weekends at Lucre Terrace, idling, sleeping and counting money. Recently their friends the Runcible-Spoones had bought Scotland, a splendidly isolated fastness somewhere north of Hadrian's Wall, for the fishing and snipe-shooting. "Scotland is rather a marvellous place – quite too too unreal with its picturesque inhabitants, its divine rocks and heather and its nutritious porridge," Rosamond wrote with her characteristic enthusiasm for unfamiliar milieux.

In spite of these pleasant distractions, however, Rosamond was privately determined that she would not, could not, remain in Newcastle, whose smell she had come finally to distrust. She tried to persuade Leslie to buy Hampshire, but he refused to consider it. Meanwhile, her relationship with the Hon. Wogan Twytte had reached such a pitch that their great family friend, the Marchioness of Tarradiddle, was disposed to exercise her legendary wit by remarking "Twytte to woo?" Wogan, passionate, excitable, dim, and the owner of several well-cut evening suits, was already noted, even in the socially exalted circles in which he moved (his eyebrows had excited the admiration of Lytton Strachey), for his remarkable charisma. "At Oxford I was mad, wild, drunk with freedom, sent mad with success and down for good," he recalled. . .

It was this time – extraordinarily considering the emotional pressures to which she was subject – that Rosamond's first novel, *Isn't This Frightfully Good?* was despatched to Chatto & Windus. "Crikey what a stunner," the firm's chief editor, Mr Harold Snargs, is thought to have remarked. "Great distinction and enormous pulling power. In addition we greatly admire the book." Nevertheless, the summer found Rosamond. . . (*continues for hundreds of pages*)

Pseuds Corner

Each dish was, in effect, a sophisticated dialogue between food and consumer, eliciting pleasure from tongue, tastebuds, and olfactory bulb. The pyrotechnics of plate arrangement had given way to unostentatious virtuosity, sublimating visual éclat to flavour and texture.

MATTHEW FORT
Guardian Weekend

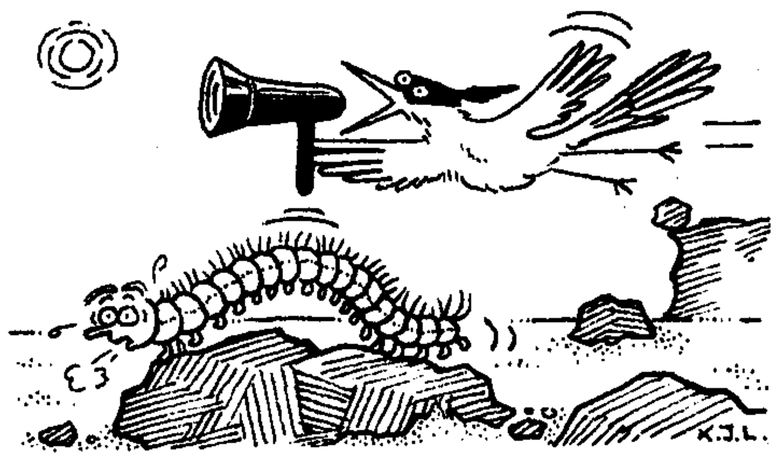
Punk's principal aesthetics were montage and bricolage: the attempt to break down the relics of a period of over-consumption and to render the pace of an accelerated age… Punk sought to expose Britain's hidden gnostic tradition…

JON SAVAGE
British Film Institute Website

Upstairs is her personal trainer. 'Actually, she's also my personal white witch,' says Emma. 'The other night I was worried my apartment was on fire, so I called her and she came down. She said: "It's not on fire, but if it's worrying you... have you got a cauldron?"

'I said "No". She said: 'Have you got a broomstick?"' I had, so then she said: "Right, let's make a spell. What makes you feel safe?" I told her Bruce Springsteen makes me feel safe, so we stuck pictures of Bruce all over the broom and we swept the apartment and she said: "Anyone in this room who's trying to fuck with Emma, leave now!" I don't believe in that stuff but it made a difference.'

Interview with EMMA FORREST
Observer



[Alain] de Botton's vision is entirely his own. Who else would observe that the cry of a black-eared wheatear has no effect on a caterpillar "walking strenuously across a rock"? Has nobody else ever noticed that the texture of Amsterdam brickwork is like that of halva from a Lebanese delicatessen?

JAN MORRIS
(on Alain de Botton's 'The Art of Travel')
New Statesman

Is there a connection between sadness and creativity?
I think there is. It is like archery. To let the arrow fly you must first pull back the string and that feels like sadness. But you must let the arrow go and not hold onto the string because that is what causes depression.

SARA BANERJI
Oxford Times

Our LotteryWatch survey of all the balls drawn for the big prize since Camelot opened for business back in October 1994 (4002 so far) reveals a more fluid pattern than the headline numbers paint, with a handful jostling for an improving position in the churning currents that lie just beneath the unchanging and unchallengeable surface tension of the meniscus.

***Mail on Sunday* 'LotteryWatch'**

Pseuds Corporate

Wink has been ramping up in the last six months and turning into a 3D business.

Ex-Wallpaper editorial director TYLER BRULEE on his creative consultancy Media Wink, *Mediaweek*.

CONTRIBUTORS: Pete Dorey and Jane King, Bill Walters, Edward Lindsay, Thomas McCarthy, Ernie Todd, Joel Brackenbury, Francesca Clarke.

£10 paid for all entries

IN THE BACK

FAT CAT AMONG THE PIGEONS

THE deep yearning by the chiefs at the Inland Revenue to recruit new colleagues from the ranks of people who are ideologically opposed to taxation is demonstrated by another sensitive but unpublicised appointment to the Revenue's higher ranks.

Last year its business tax section said it wanted to be seen as a "champion of business". Hence the appointment of one Richard Baron to the section, who comes straight from the Institute of Directors where he was deputy head of policy under director Ruth Lea, well known in the media as the country's leading heroine of the "fat cats".

At the IoD Baron's job was to proclaim the institute's policy on taxation, which can be best summed up as "cut taxes to 'free' businessmen from regulation, otherwise known as red tape".

In March he penned a report called *The Red Tape Menace*, a standard plea for business to be excused responsibility in matters of tax. With Lea and Graeme Leach, the IoD's chief economist, he also published the institute's representations for the 2002 budget, subtly entitled *Tax and Spend: gamble on public services*. This paper recommended:

- No new taxes and no increases in tax rates or extensions of the coverage of tax
- Transformation of the UK into the "first-choice location" for business and, to assist that process, a "review" of several aspects of business taxation that make life so difficult for frugal business people.
- A new fiscal rule to direct all governments that tax as a proportion of gross domestic product should fall.

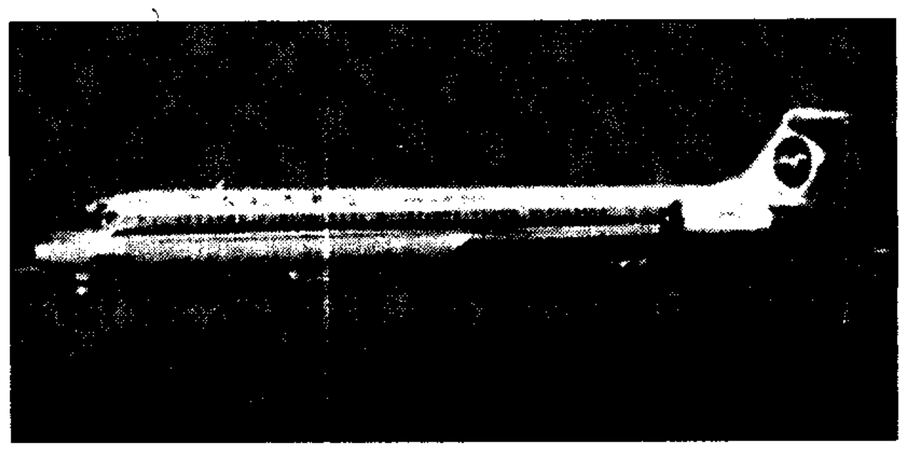
Added to this was an attack on the proposals of the Inland Revenue business section to extend rules to stop tax avoidance. These are the rules that will now be supervised by the very department Mr Baron is to lead.

The fair-mindedness that inspires Mr Baron was on display in an article he wrote shortly before the budget in *Accountancy Age*. "We can certainly expect some progress in the budget," he announced cheerfully. The "most important proposal", he explained, "is the new exemption for trading companies selling substantial shareholdings in other trading companies." Gains on such transactions, he exulted, "will not be taxable". But, he warned, "other countries have similar exemptions". In Holland, he observed, "the minimum shareholding necessary to qualify for the relief is 5 percent" and in Germany it is "as small as you like".

His advice for chancellor Gordon Brown was that he should "look again as to whether the UK minimum should be as high as the proposed 20 percent". Brown obviously reads this stuff. For when the budget came, the minimum shareholding necessary to qualify for this relief was dropped from the proposed 20 percent to 10 percent.

Then again Mr Baron complained about the "immediate tax charge" when a company acquires an asset and then leaves the group within six years. This rule, he whined, was "introduced to prevent tax avoidance but it is also a major hassle for groups wanting to undertake ordinary commercial transactions". Or again "the rules which tax profits made in low-tax overseas subsidiaries, again aimed at tax avoiders, can be just as unfriendly to legitimate commercial groups". These recommendations don't seem to have been noticed by Brown and were not in the budget. Now Mr Baron has such an influential post at the Revenue, maybe that will change.

DU: A BURNING ISSUE



LAST month's crash of a China Air Boeing 747 is a timely reminder of the presence of depleted uranium (DU) on board big jets. TriStars, DC10s and all jumbos made before 1993 carry built-in bars of DU as counterweights in the tail of the aircraft.

Intact, DU presents no danger other than a minor emission of radioactive alpha particles. But when burnt, it releases deadly uranium oxide particles into the atmosphere that are known to travel on the wind for many miles. According to the US Institute for Molecular Medicine: "If even one particle of uranium oxide, of less than five micrometers, is trapped in the pulmonary system, the lungs and surrounding tissues can be exposed over a year up to 272 times the annual radiation dosage permitted radiation workers by US regulations."

After two jumbos collided in a fireball on the runway at Tenerife airport in the mid-1970s, a Spanish policeman died from effects thought to be related to DU poisoning. In Britain the problem was highlighted by the Lockerbie disaster. A policeman arrived at the hangar where the wreckage was being collected with a piece of metal shaped like a large bar of Toblerone, which was too heavy to carry. So he dragged it across the concrete floor, making the bar spark. It was a DU counterweight. Two of the 18 bars of DU from that aircraft are still missing. No problem according to the authorities – they probably fell into the Keilder reservoir.

In October 1992, an El-Al 747 freighter crashed into a block of flats in Amsterdam, killing 43 people. Of the 390kg of DU used as counterweights in that aircraft, only 130kg were ever recovered. DU particles were found both at the crash site and in the crash hangar. A Dutch parliamentary commission was ordered and concluded that: "In all probability the particles had been inhaled by rescue workers and citizens."

That warning that rescue services were vulnerable to uranium oxide was not taken seriously enough here in Britain. In December 1999 a Korean Airlines cargo 747 crashed on take-off from Stansted. Firemen fought and finally subdued the huge blaze resulting from the crash. Four bars of DU are still missing and are believed to have burnt and oxidised. While firemen closest to the blaze were using breathing apparatus, other firemen, police and ambulance workers had no protection. Nor were they warned of any dangers due to uranium oxide.

Malcolm Hooper, professor emeritus of the medicinal chemistry department of Sunderland University, is sure those dangers are very real. "I can't see any way you could have a significant fire in a crash like this without producing the conditions that would allow a potentially hazardous release of DU," he says. "If no precautions were taken at the scene, people would have been exposed to hazards that could prove fatal."

DU is the by-product created when uranium ore is enriched for use in nuclear weapons or nuclear power stations. For every ton of enriched uranium, 143 tons of DU are produced. It is readily available, cheap and is used in yacht keels, the tips of helicopter rotors, medical instruments, and enamel jewellery.

HOME TRUTHS FROM MENCAP

KATHLEEN WILLOUGHBY, 84, has spent her life caring for her daughter Rachel who has Down's syndrome and diabetes, worrying about what would happen if she died before her daughter or if she became too old to cope with her.

In 1995, aged 77, she thought she had found the answer: with other ageing parents of similarly disabled children, she formed a carers' association to raise funds, find premises and campaign for a home. With the help of local social services and the New Era Housing Association, The Limes, a home for eight Down's adults, including Rachel, opened in Keynsham, near Bristol.

The parents, all local members of Mencap, invited the charity to run the home and provide the care. Mrs Willoughby had been a founder member from the days when Mencap was called the National Society for Backward Children and believed it would take good care of the residents as their needs changed over the years.

The parents helped appoint a manager and breathed a huge sigh of relief as their children, all in their 40s and 50s, moved in. But within two years the respected and trusted manager suddenly left, with no explanation from Mencap; and the next, who hardly set foot in The Limes, lasted about three months. There were other financial and staffing problems; and the parents found themselves increasingly at odds with Mencap.

As an added worry for Rachel and her mother, Rachel's health deteriorated: she needed bowel surgery and her diabetes became unstable. After a three-month convalescence, she returned to the home in February and resumed her old life of voluntary work, meeting friends at her day centre and taking trips out. Unfortunately she suffered further stomach problems and was readmitted to the Royal United Hospital in Bath in April.

Rachel is still there, stuck in a hospital bed because the home her mother helped set up will not take her back due to her medical condition — despite Mencap's claim to "provide for our residential clients whose needs have changed".

The local social services department offered to provide the extra nursing care Rachel would need until her health stabilised so she could return to the home, but Mencap rejected this. Even though it was an interim measure, Mencap said it would breach the terms of its registration as a care home.

In fact, Mencap has announced that it is pulling out of The Limes altogether in October saying "the support service in the home has been struggling for a number of years with recruitment and retention of permanent staff and this has had an impact on the quality and cost of the service... We understand how families feel about this move, particularly as they worked so hard to set up the home in 1995 and are very sorry for any upset that has been caused."

The only hope is that another organisation will provide care and support in the home, or they will all have to move, as Mencap puts it, to "accommodation that better suits their needs". Rachel has been offered two places: one in an old people's home, which is inappropriate given her age, character and abilities; and another away from her friends and familiar surroundings.

Mencap did not want to talk about Rachel's case, but Rachel's sister, Judith McCannon, said: "Contrary to popular belief, Down's men and women do not conveniently die in early middle age – there is a large vulnerable and ageing population out there with no one addressing their needs. The parents who helped set up the home could have gone on to help it thrive and prosper. Mencap has ruined their project.@

KAISER BILL!

NOTHING annoys the private health industry more than the statement in the government's NHS plan for 2000 that "the NHS gets more and fairer health care for every pound invested than most other health care systems".

In the new and reinvigorated offensive against the NHS from private health organisations, academics and the companies that finance them have been making strenuous efforts to cast doubt on this palpable truth. The latest in a long line of such assaults was published in January in the *British Medical Journal*. Its authors were Richard Feacham, director of something called the Institute for Global Health at the University of California, and two other California academics.

In a seven-page paper, Mr Feacham and colleagues tried to compare the costs and performance in the NHS with those of an "integrated system for financing and delivery of health services" in California, set up by a private profitable organisation with the seductive name of Kaiser Permanente.

The academics came to the arresting conclusion that "Kaiser achieved better performance at roughly the same cost as the NHS" and attributed part of that to "the benefits of competition". The paper suggested this was a fair comparison since "in many ways Kaiser Permanente is, like the NHS, providing a similar range of services for a population similar to that of a small country".

Publication of the Feacham paper led to a storm of protest. Some of it came from ordinary citizens like Susan Williams, a state registered British nurse working in California, who wrote: "I was appalled by your article, and wish to state that the overall quality of hospital and nursing care is infinitely better in the NHS."

Nigel Edwards, policy director of the NHS Confederation, complained that the adjustments made to bring Kaiser's costs in line with those of the NHS were "completely illegitimate". He exposed "a number of other flaws in the economic analysis which are also close to fatal".

Clive Smee, chief economic adviser to the health department, was also unimpressed by the Feacham paper. "Kaiser is indisputably much more expensive than the NHS, per capita," he wrote. The per capita cost of the NHS is barely 60 percent of Kaiser, $1,161 compared with $1,951." He concluded: "From the data in this paper there can be no doubt at all that in terms of total costs per capita, Kaiser is far more expensive than the NHS."

How, then, did Feacham and Co arrive at their conclusions? By fiddling the figures. For instance, Feacham's claim that Kaiser's members in California are representative of the US population as a whole is demonstrably false. Only 3.8 percent of Kaiser's members are "low income or indigent" compared with 13.8 percent of California's population as a whole. Kaiser also excludes the fifth of California's population that are not insured for health purposes. The whole point of the National Health Service, by contrast, is that it excludes no one. All the adjustments made by the authors have the effect of distorting the comparison between Kaiser and the NHS to the gross disadvantage of the latter.

The sustained assault on the Feacham paper even from the department of health's economic adviser does not seem to have influenced the government, however, whose spokespeople are keen to promote the argument for Kaiser. The Wanless report in April by the treasury trends review team, *Securing Our Future Health: Taking a Long-term View*, has a warm reference to Kaiser, as does the recent department of health report, *Delivering The NHS Plan*. While pretty well everyone who has read and understood the Feacham puff for Kaiser rejects it as a load of hooey, the increasingly confident health privateers in high places continue to praise it.

PS: Not everything about Kaiser Permanente is wonderful. In the last three years it has notched up 64 percent of all fines for medical malpractice in California. Kaiser's total fines in the period came to $1,635,000, while all the other medical fines in the state of California came to $925,500. State and federal investigations into Kaiser in Texas and California are proceeding. These follow sweeping efforts by Kaiser to cut costs. Reggie James, southwest regional director of the US Consumers Union, says: "In an effort to be more competitive and cut costs, they are cutting services." No wonder the new privateers of the NHS are so impressed!

DEAF TO REASON

AS a result of a misheard 20-second phone call with a 13-year-old partially deaf and emotionally vulnerable foster child, a careworker with an unblemished record lost his job, was put on the sex offenders' register and suffered a nervous breakdown that brought him to the brink of suicide.

The girl, whose hearing problems meant she often had to lip read, told her foster parents she thought the caller had made an obscene suggestion to her. The parents reported the call to police, who traced it to Newcastle careworker Paul Gillon, whose job was to support foster parents.

He had been trying to contact the parents to discuss problems they had been having with the child, when the girl herself answered the phone. Her foster mother was having her hair styled with a noisy hairdryer at the time, and when Gillon said he wanted to talk to her foster parents, the girl put the phone down on him.

Newcastle city council social services department suspended Gillon pending an investigation, during which he was not interviewed. He was then sacked following a disciplinary hearing at which he was not even present. In addition, his union rep was denied access to records that revealed details of the child's hearing problems and the fact that she had a history of making up stories.

Although police did not pursue the matter, Gillon – who had spent nine years in social services and fostering – was put on the sex offenders' register and banned from working with children ever again, without even being able to put his side of events.

He was vindicated last month when an industrial tribunal condemned the council for its "knee-jerk" reaction and awarded him the maximum £20,000 for unfair dismissal and discrimination. The panel said it would have liked to award him £90,000 for the suffering he had endured but was restricted by rules operating at the time of his illegal sacking in June 1999.

Gillon has now had his name removed from the sex offenders' register, but he is still clinically depressed. He said: "They could give me a million pounds and I'd return every penny just to have the last four years of my life back." He stressed that he had every sympathy with the child, who "did no more than damaged children sometimes do"; but said it was those responsible for the investigation and disciplinary hearing who should be sacked. "I am on anti-depressants, I can't go out in my own streets and I've suffered a nervous breakdown – and I just cannot understand how it was allowed to happen."

Gillon's solicitor Stefan Cross plans to take the case to the European court over the right to a fair hearing and a fair remedy and said: "Newcastle had been at the centre of two very big child abuse investigations – and this time on the flimsiest of evidence, I think they simply decided that Paul's career and life were disposable." Newcastle city council did not want to discuss the case.

LENS: A LAW TO THEMSELVES?

TOP politicians and creepy "private security" types are congregating in London for the second Law Enforcement and National Security (LENS) conference from 11 to 13 June. Like last year, half the big firms promoting "law enforcement" are themselves big time law breakers.

David Burrill, head of security at British American Tobacco, will speak on "sharing ownership" between business and government on law enforcement. BAT, meanwhile, is facing worldwide investigations into smuggling and legal challenges in Malaysia where it advertised cigarettes using pictures of David Beckham, Michael Owen and others without permission.

BAT's approach to the law was seen in Australia recently when a judge ordered it to pay £250,000 to a cancer sufferer who had accused it of deliberately misleading smokers about health risks. Judge Eames had BAT's defence struck out when he discovered an orgy of document-shredding to hide incriminating evidence.

LENS delegates will also hear from Dr Shaun McCarthy, corporate intelligence adviser for Shell. The company still faces lawsuits alleging that it bankrolled the Nigerian government's war against the Ogoni people who stood in the way of oil drilling. Shell has also been fined for tax evasion and pollution. In 2000 it paid the US government $56m after it "systematically under-reported" money it owed. And last year two Shell-led consortia agreed to pay $416m in clean air fines and clean-up costs for its American refineries.

And what of arms firms like TRW and Lockheed, which sponsor the conference?

TRW has paid a staggering $389,484,000 in fines, settlements and restitution in the US since 1990 after being charged with cheating workers and pensioners, fiddling cash on government contracts and faking tests on weapons. It was also fined for pollution, including causing "death due to an explosion of hazardous waste".

Meanwhile Lockheed, whose vice-president civil affairs Ron Vucurevich will address delegates, has paid $231,872,404 since 1990 for offences including fraud, sex discrimination, bribes, kickbacks and exporting military secrets. Another sponsor, France's Thales, is under investigation for a huge bribery scam allegedly involving sweeteners of $2bn linked to the sale of warships to Taiwan.

The conference is of course supported by the British home office and Tony Blair even offers delegates a personal welcome, describing it as "an innovative vehicle for continuing the search for better national, international and corporate security". Former Tory defence minister and intelligence guru Tom King will talk to those paying £1,150 for the three-day ticket, as will Dame Pauline Neville Jones. She famously moved from the foreign office where she had backed appeasement of Serbia's Slobodan Milosevic, to NatWest, where she signed deals with the butcher. She obviously knows how the world works and will speak on "Governance in the Face of Societal Change and Corruption".

You can hear them both for only £1,150: Pauline Neville Jones and Tom King

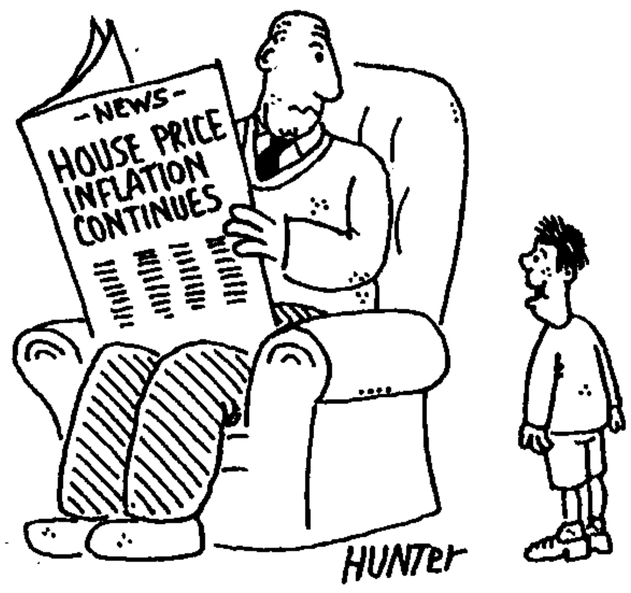
You can contact Paul Foot on 020 7287 3183 or the In the Back team on 020 7437 4017

In the City

THE Guinness Four will be back in front of the Law Lords come October in yet another bid to overturn their 1990 fraud convictions. And this time the omens suggest a decision in their favour is perhaps more likely than in three previous appeals. Also, in a bid to bring finality to the long-running saga, the appeal may be heard by a panel of seven judges – a rare occurrence – to produce a ruling binding in not just Guinness but similar cases.

The appeal is to rule on whether the English courts are obliged to enforce decisions made by the European court of human rights as part of our treaty obligations or merely take note of them.

All four Guinness defendants – first former chief executive Ernest Saunders and then three of the secret share support players, Gerald Ronson, Anthony Parnes and Jack Lyons – have won rulings from Strasbourg that their trials were unfair. This was over the use of evidence compelled from them under the now changed law covering investigations by the Department of Timidity & Inaction. The Guinness Four will argue that not to follow this ruling by the European court and quash their convictions is a breach of Britain's agreement by signing the European convention on human rights.



"Dad, could I have a £5k advance against the increased value of my room over the past twelve months?"

At issue is whether the passage into British law of the convention in October 2000 created a great divide before which it did not apply to convictions or appeals. Research by the defendants has uncovered evidence that when preparing the human rights act it was assumed by parliamentary draftsmen that the new law incorporating the convention would be retrospective.

However, when the law lords considered that point no less than twice last year, they came to two opposite conclusions which they reconciled by the remarkable legal contortion that it was more important to be consistent – in saying the law was not retrospective – than to be right!

In July the law lords ruled 4-1 in the Lambert case that the convention was not fully retrospective in applying to pre-2000 convictions. But in November, when four of the same judges considered the question again in the Kansal case, a 3-2 majority with Lord Hope joining Lord Steyn, the dissenting vote in Lambert, agreed the convention was retrospective and the previous decision wrong. However, the law lords then decided 4-1, with Steyn supporting a decision he had twice considered to be wrong, that it was more important for the highest court in the land to be consistent if wrong as it was too soon to overturn Lambert. However, Lord Lloyd, one of those voting against change, suggested the issue of retrospectivity should be reconsidered by a panel of seven judges to produce a definitive decision particularly in the light of the impending Guinness appeal.

This was a severe blow for the Guinness defendants who had intervened in the Kansal case. The following month the court of appeal rejected their third appeal on the basis of the Kansal decision.

However, in March the senior law lord Lord Bingham allowed them to appeal to the Lords not on the Kansal point but on whether the European court's ruling that they had not had a fair trial meant the convictions must be quashed – the right to a fair trial being part of the convention.

The appeal will specifically not reargue the Kansal case in order to prevent further embarrassment to their lordships by suggesting that our greatest legal minds can make mistakes which are so quickly exposed. Instead, a piece of legal sophistry is likely whereby the judges will rule on the question of restrospectivity without ruling on it in general, thereby risking the floodgates argument which, in the words of one appeal court judge, would see Guy Fawkes appealing his conviction. The trick will be to limit the argument to those cases – such as Guinness – which were ruled on by Strasbourg before October 2000.

At least four law lords – three in the Kansal case plus Bingham – have already expressed views in favour of the convention applying retrospectively so the Guinness Four are off to a good start in the panel from which any seven will be drawn if Lloyd's suggestion is taken up. No decision has yet been disclosed on who or how many will hear the latest appeal. Also, the appeal court suggested in the latest Guinness ruling that it would have to quash the convictions if the convention was fully retrospective irrespective of the point that the convictions were safe in any event because there was other evidence to convict on other than the DTI transcripts – a position taken in a previous appeal.

The Serious Farce Office will defend its most prestigious conviction by presumably arguing that the courts do have some discretion and that Britain is not in breach of its treaty obligations by doing so. However, this means that the Guinness convictions may well be decided not on whether what the defendants did was wrong or illegal or whether they are innocent, but merely on the meaning of words in unrelated legislation.

But even if the Guinness Four win and their convictions are quashed on a technicality, this does not mean they will be pronounced innocent by the law lords or that a favourable ruling will lead to multi-millions in compensation and the restoration of Jack Lyons' knighthood.

A ruling earlier this year by the high court in the case of a convicted IRA terrorist freed because his extradition from Zimbabwe was held to be an abuse of process suggests all that will be on offer will be a repayment of legal fees, themselves running into millions for all but Saunders who was for the trial at least in part on legal aid.

"Compensation goes only to those ultimately proved innocent, not to all those whose convictions are adjudged unsafe," declared Lord Justice Simon Brown, who defined miscarriage of justice as meaning "the wrongful conviction of an innocent accused".

So any decision in favour of the Guinness defendants may not have to bear the brunt of public outrage over millions in taxpayers' money going to "Alzheimer" and his helpers.

Few in the City believe Saunders was innocent or most of those such as Ronson who participated in and were richly rewarded for the secret share support operation without which Guinness would not have prevailed in its 1986 takeover battle for Distillers. There is more sympathy for Parnes and Lyons, especially given the confusion over whether share support was allowed. What is undeniable is that the secret payments made by Guinness broke the law because they were not approved by the directors and involved false accounting in the manner in which they were paid. That is certain to weigh in the judges' minds. The law lords will have to decide whether the Guinness Four are one of those bad cases which make good law.

THE phoney pharaoh Mohamed Fayed has more than his tax bills to worry about. He is due in the high court this week with the commissioner of the Metropolitan police over his arrest in 1998 as part of the investigation into the break-in carried out to the Harrods safe deposit box owned by his hated rival, "Tiny" Rowland.

Fayed is claiming compensation for false arrest.

The ruling by Lord Gill in the court of session last month overturning Fayed's highly favourable "£240,000 a year – no questions asked" deal with the Inland Revenue for himself and three members of his family is further likely to increase the financial pressure within the Harrods empire. A pressure evidenced by Fayed's sudden decision the same week to close down *Punch* after pouring in more than £13m.

Since the now revoked deal with the taxman came into effect in 1997, Fayed and his brothers have received almost £94m in dividends from Harrods Holdings via a chain of offshore companies culminating in Bermuda. Even if

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DREDGE/RIGG

CORPORATE DONATIONS BUY ACCESS OF COURSE...
...BUT IT'S ABSURD TO SAY THAT THEY BUY INFLUENCE...
I WANT MY MONEY BACK, D'YOU HEAR ? EVERY PENNY !

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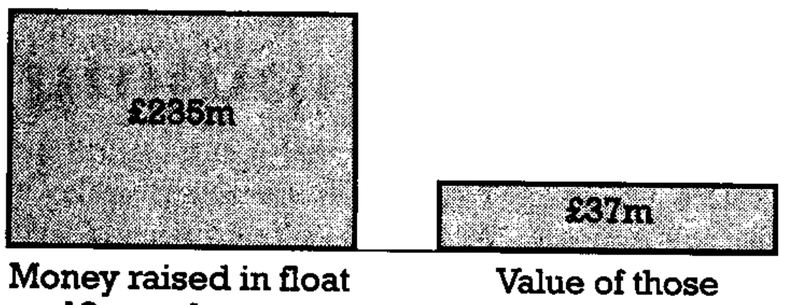


Money raised in float 18 months ago

Value of those shares now

chairman Mo's share was only a third – unlikely given the way he dominates the family – that still makes the £1.2m paid to the taxman small change in comparison to a potential £12m liability for Fayed alone. Ali and Salah Fayed live abroad.

Then there are the huge amounts – more than £60m at Fulham alone, plus *Punch* – that Fayed has poured into financing his hobbies. Where did that come from and what if any UK tax was paid? As the money came from the British Virgin Islands or Jersey, the answer is probably none. Harrods paid dividends in 1997 and 1998 as well as last year. Then, as Lord Gill declared, the Revenue acceptance of £240,000 was "little short of a random figure".

Now that the Revenue intends to tax Fayed on an actual not a notional basis, the bills could be substantial – especially if the years back to 1997 or beyond are reopened. And that could force Fayed to take more out at a time when Harrods, his only money maker, is putting less into his coffers. Unless an appeal is successful there could have to be more embarrassing sacrifices than just *Punch*.

AS WITH fast food, the American way is to have speedy justice. A jury in Houston is asked to decided whether accountant Andersen obstructed the Enron investigation by the Securities & Exchange Commission seven months after the documents were shredded and less than three months after Andersen was indicted.

Such unseemly alacrity would never be possible in Britain. The SFO does not necessarily have to decide whether to prosecute within a year of taking on an investigation, often into events that happened years before. And it then takes often two or more years for the case to come to trial. That is nothing to do with juries or the need for a national fraud squad. It is to do with defence lawyers and the ways in which they are able, with the acquiescence of the courts, to delay trials. But then if you are guilty why should you want speedy justice? Justice delayed is indeed justice and prison denied.

THE growing stain from the criminal investigation into Tyco and the mushrooming civil actions is certain to expand ever more in the direction of major shareholder Michael Ashcroft.

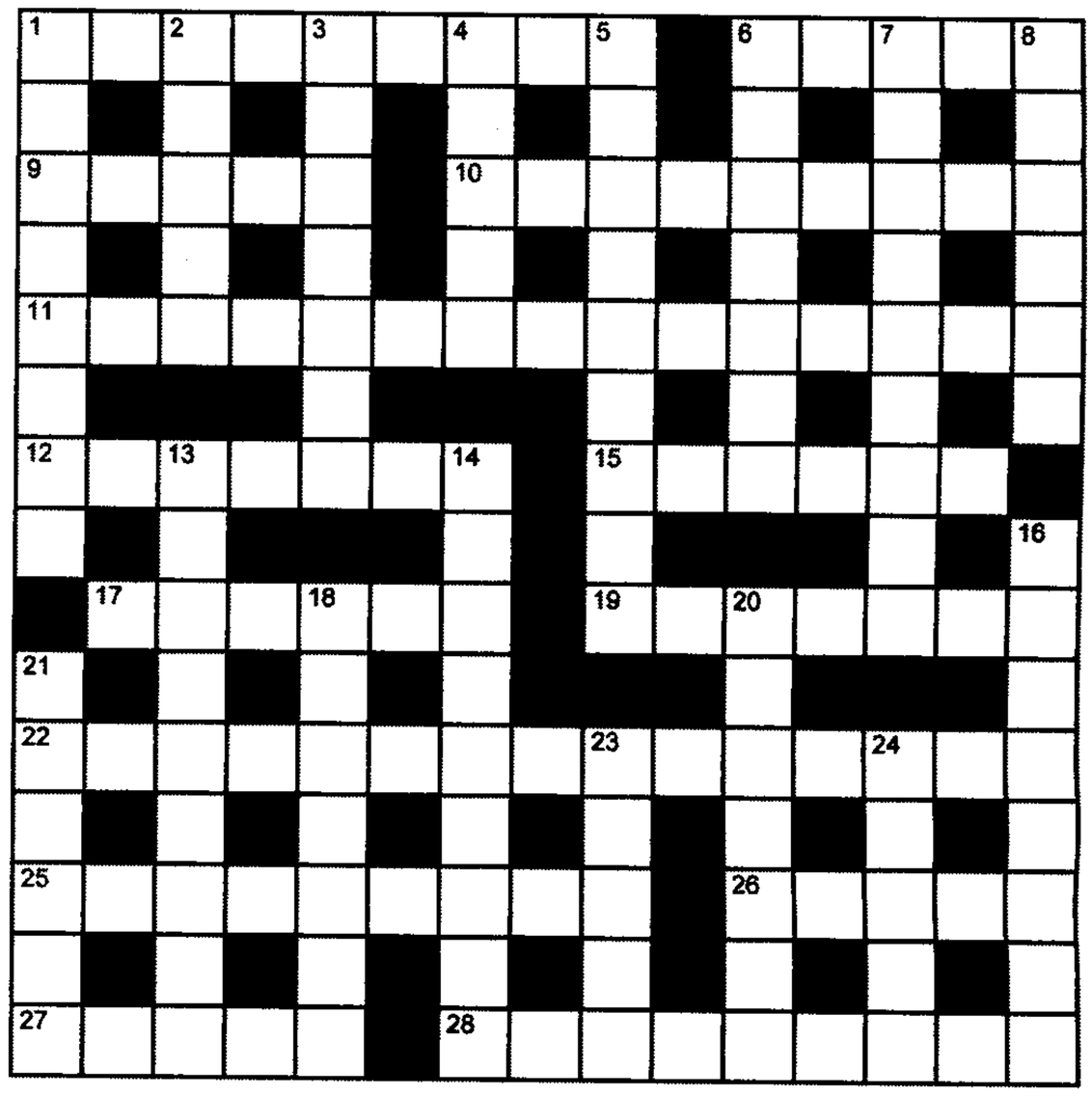
Not just because he sold a Florida home to a Tyco executive who may have bought with $2.7m of company money from Ashcroft's wife who paid Ashcroft just $100 for the house the same day. Not just because of his sales of Tyco shares before they dived from $60 in January to below $20 after chairman Dennis Kozlowski (who bought Ashcroft's ADT) quit ahead of an indictment for tax evasion. More telling are likely to be the questions Ashcroft asked or did not ask as a Tyco non-executive director about certain of Kozlowski's practices.

The fact that Ashcroft would have appeared to have agreed to a fellow non-executive director being paid millions for introducing a deal to Tyco suggests if he did ask many questions they were not the right ones. But then those who know Ashcroft would never see the former Tory treasurer as big on transparency or corporate governance.

'Slicker'

EYE CROSSWORD 211

by Cyclops



£100 prize to first correct solution opened on 21 June 2002.

Entries to 'Crossword', Private Eye, 6 Carlisle Street, London W1D 3BN or via email to crossword@private-eye.co.uk

ACROSS

1 They deeply regret seeing Dick hiding temporary erection (9)

6 Trouser action lacking so is comparatively faithful (5)

9 Moralistic author knocks back the drink at work (5)

10 True article about Clare Short "married, coquettish" (4,5)

11 Seaman's in: manages to gather one ball, then is a complete waste of time (4-5,6)

12 Selina broadcast ropes in Beeb head, Dyke (7)

15 Savage follow-up to impolite attention-getter done with much smarm (6)

17 What's a missile loader doing "restoring" the Venus de Milo? (6)

19 Recruits led by Mark go on the piss (5,2)

22 Piss off on ship, as the French would put it, à la Michael Palin (6,3,6)

25 Is it for this hangers-on do what they do, being dire to the end? (4,5)

26 Politician Tony Blair's first to go (universal interest? — lack of interest, actually) (5)

27 Pointlessly prosecute flipping tabloid darling (5)

28 Taxing hair covered in grass (9)

DOWN

1 Charlie to take the plunge — comical business (8)

2 Curious type would become toady with Brown as leader (5)

3 Palace puts lid on Pik Botha's final collapse (7)

4 Bugs used by the police (5)

5 Lust after Flowers pictures (9)

6 T. Blair, not one to be messed around — er, in the cart (7)

7 Practises coitus interruptus as a result of tabloid topless twosomes? (9)

8 Sluttish hairy daughter's inside? Capital (6)

13 Well-built and laying on the corrective punishment? (9)

14 Birds serving late drinks (9)

16 Excellent sexual activity for some (8)

18 Leftie Davies takes one arse over tip — neat! (2,5)

20 Homosexuality's not a serious condition (7)

21 Soundly puts down Monica following very coarse gestures (1-5)

23 Book to see Queen outside Surrey area (5)

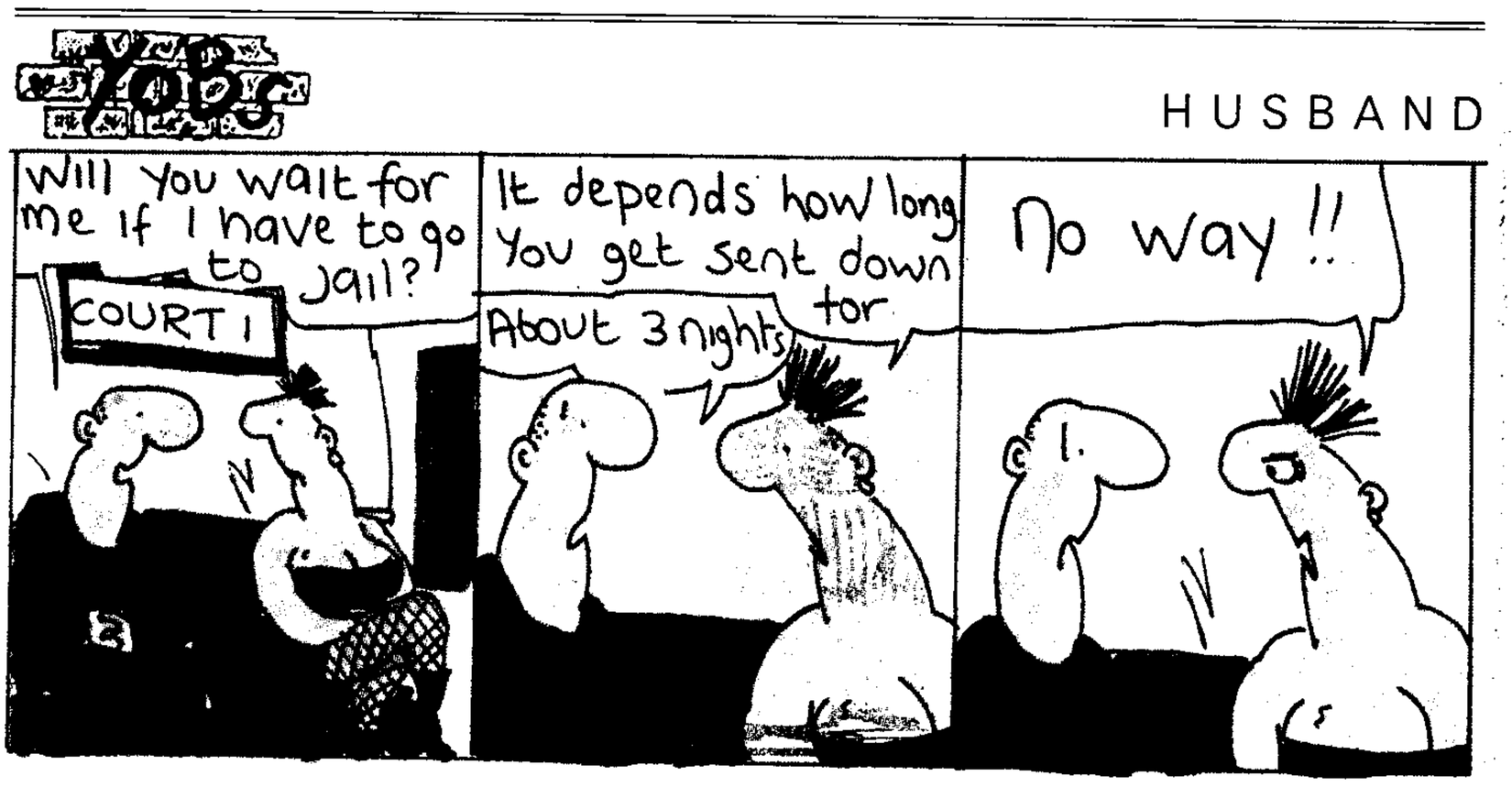
24 Hard one getting up princess in Asian city (5)

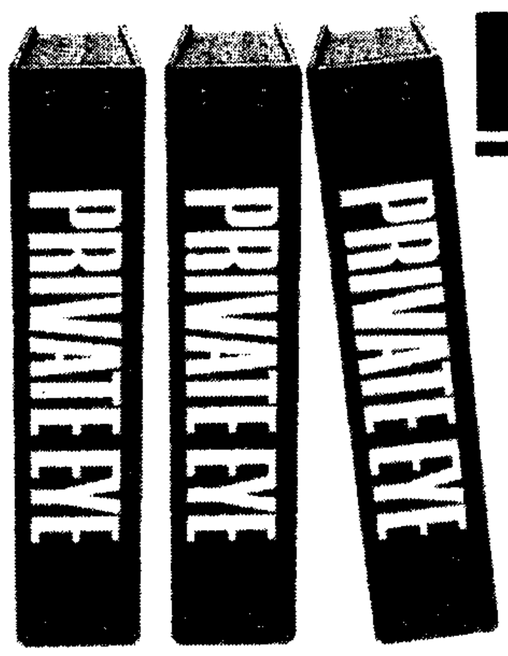
Crossword 210 winner: JERRY JOPSON

Solution to Crossword 210

ACROSS: 1 Finks 4 Pubic hair 9 Rattiness 10 Stuff 11 Impacts 12 Oversee 13/15 Gooseberry bush 18 Sots 19 Blackballs 22 Abasing 24 Sickbed 25 In-off 26 Tarantula 27 In the know 28 Rheum.

DOWN: 1 Farting 2 Not up to it 3 Snitches 4 Piers 5 Bishopric 6 Cusser 7 Arums 8 Refresh 14 Enlighten 16 Ugly brute 17 Obscener 18 Swahili 20 Sidearm 21 Piffle 23 Afoot 24 Screw.


YOBS
HUSBAND
Will you wait for me if I have to go to jail?
COURT 1
It depends how long you get sent down for
About 3 nights
No way !!



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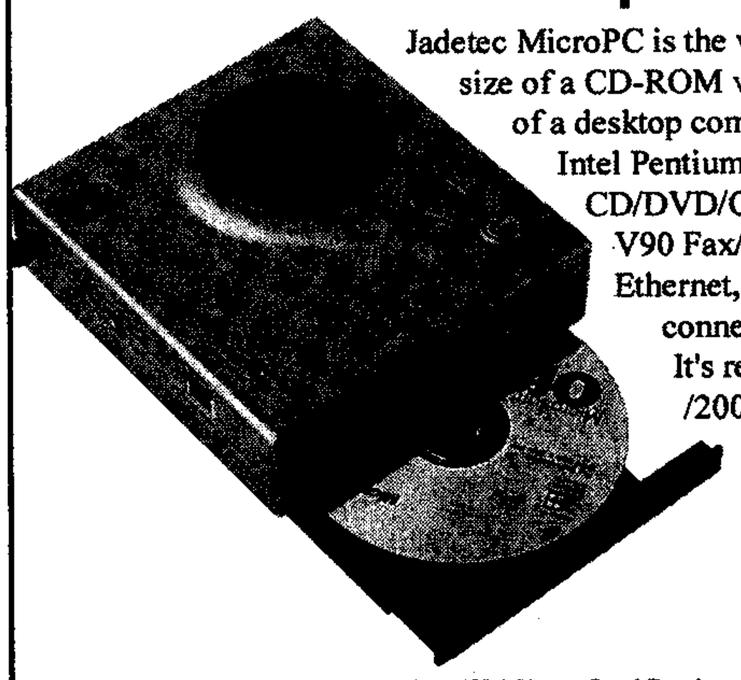

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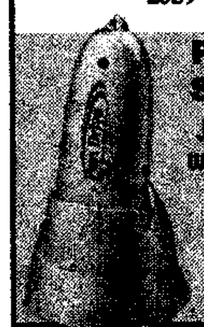

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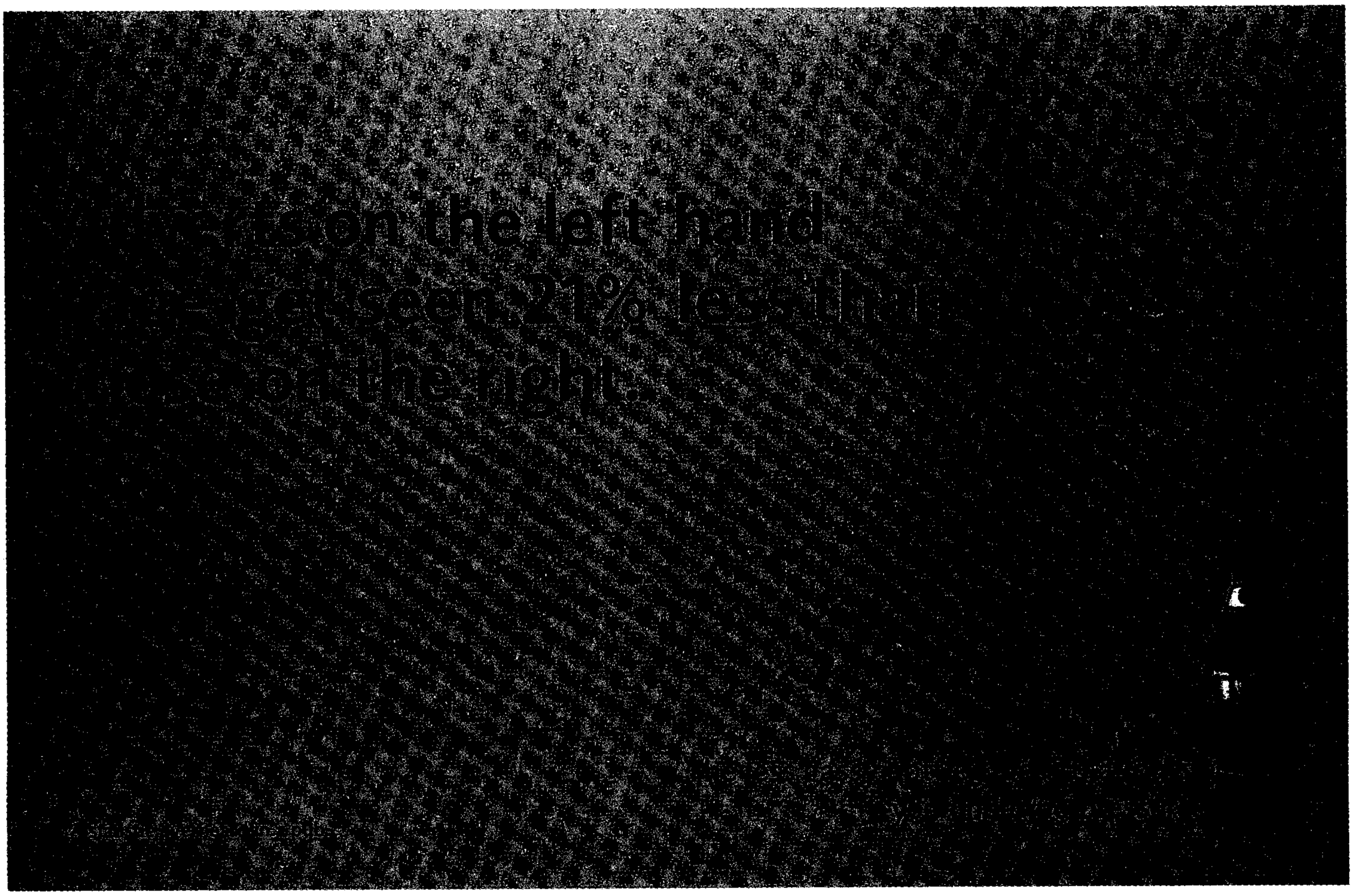

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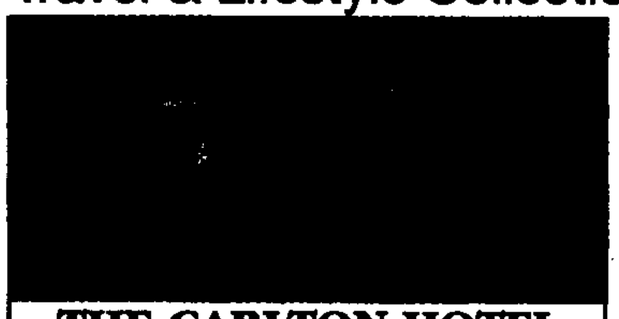

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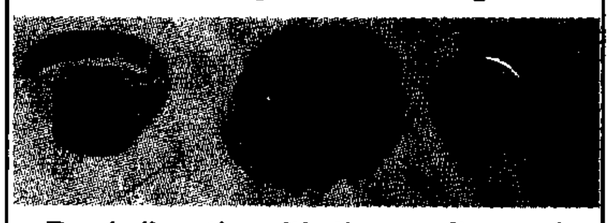

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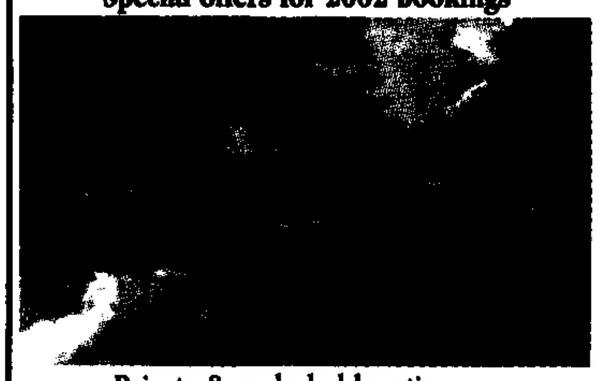

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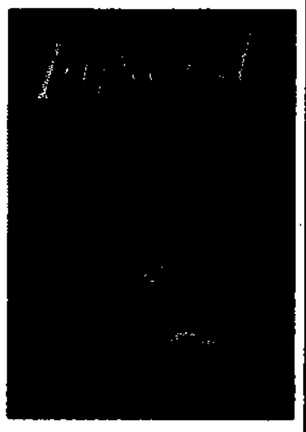

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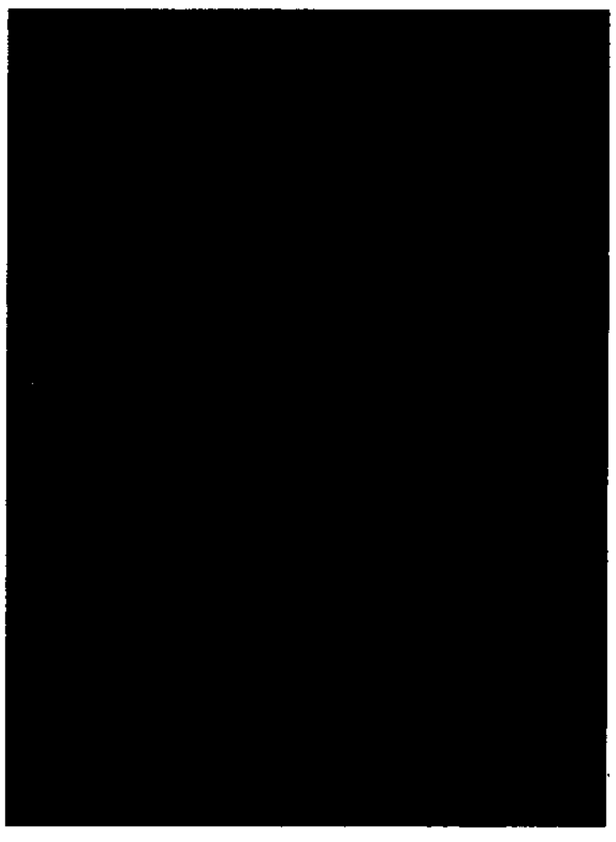

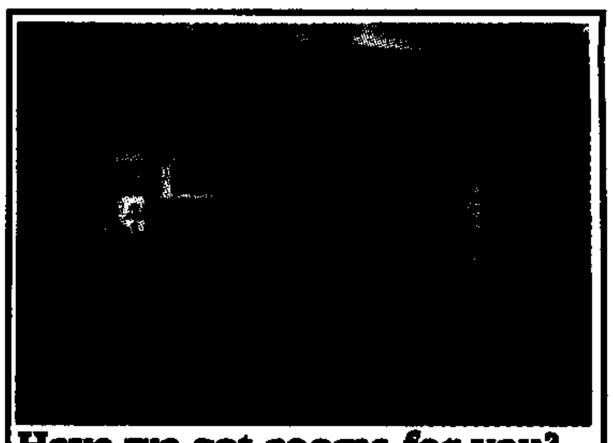

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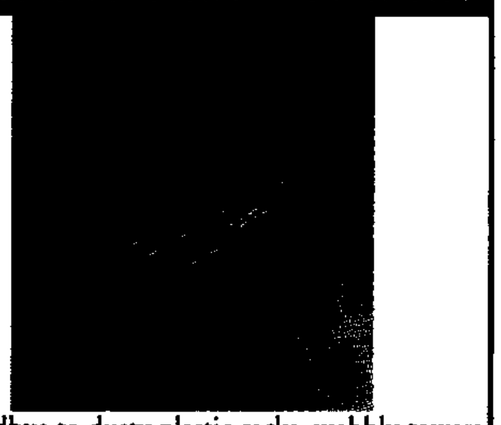

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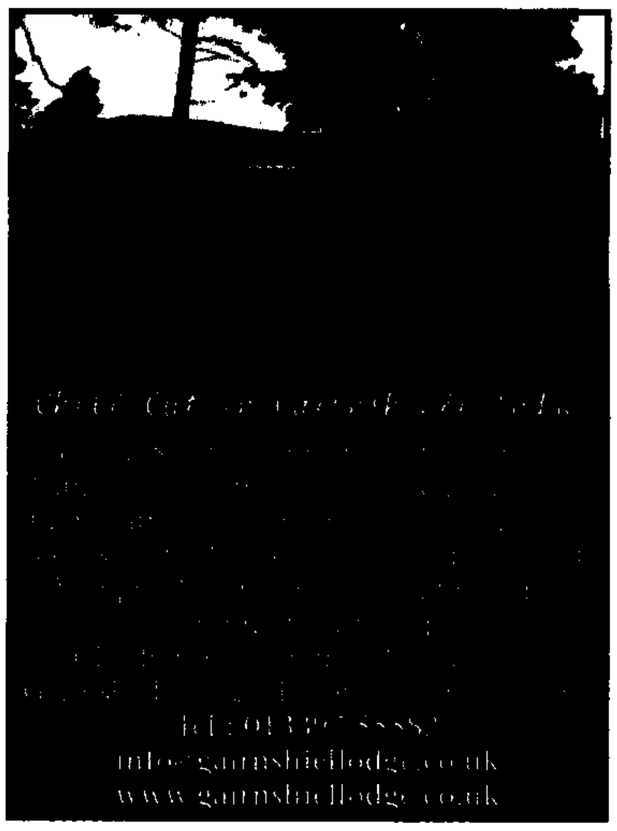

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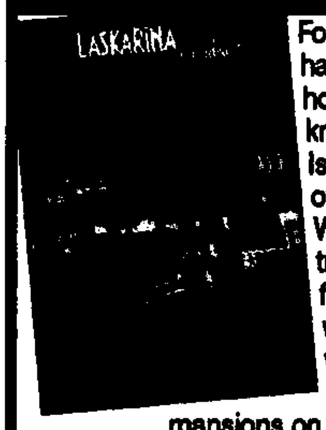

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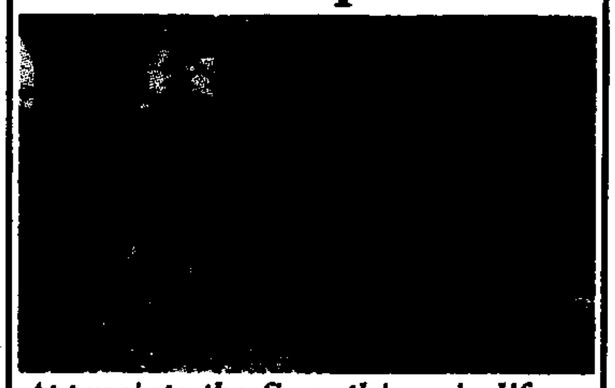

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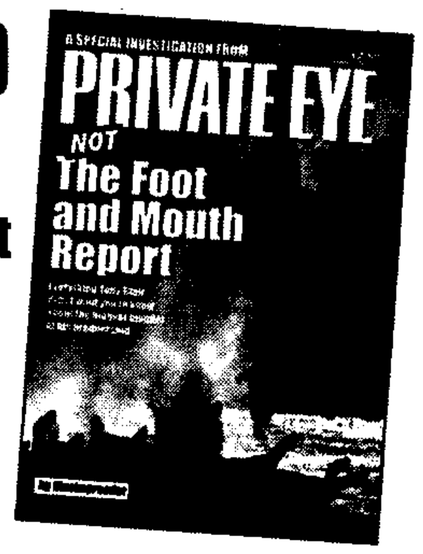

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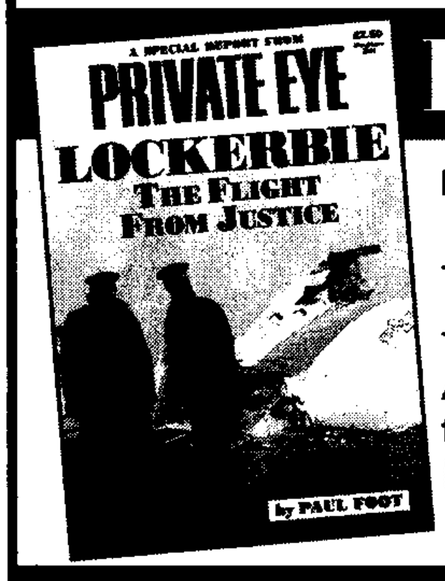

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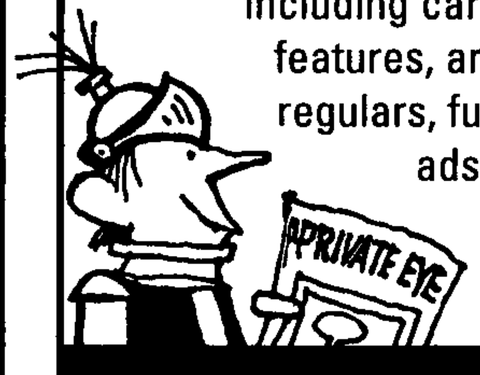

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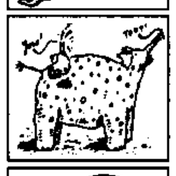

The site also has extensive biographies, including **Ronald Searle** and **Kipper Williams** and the **Search by Subject** pages contain **12** categories from **Art** to **Therapy,** showing over **120** original cartoons.

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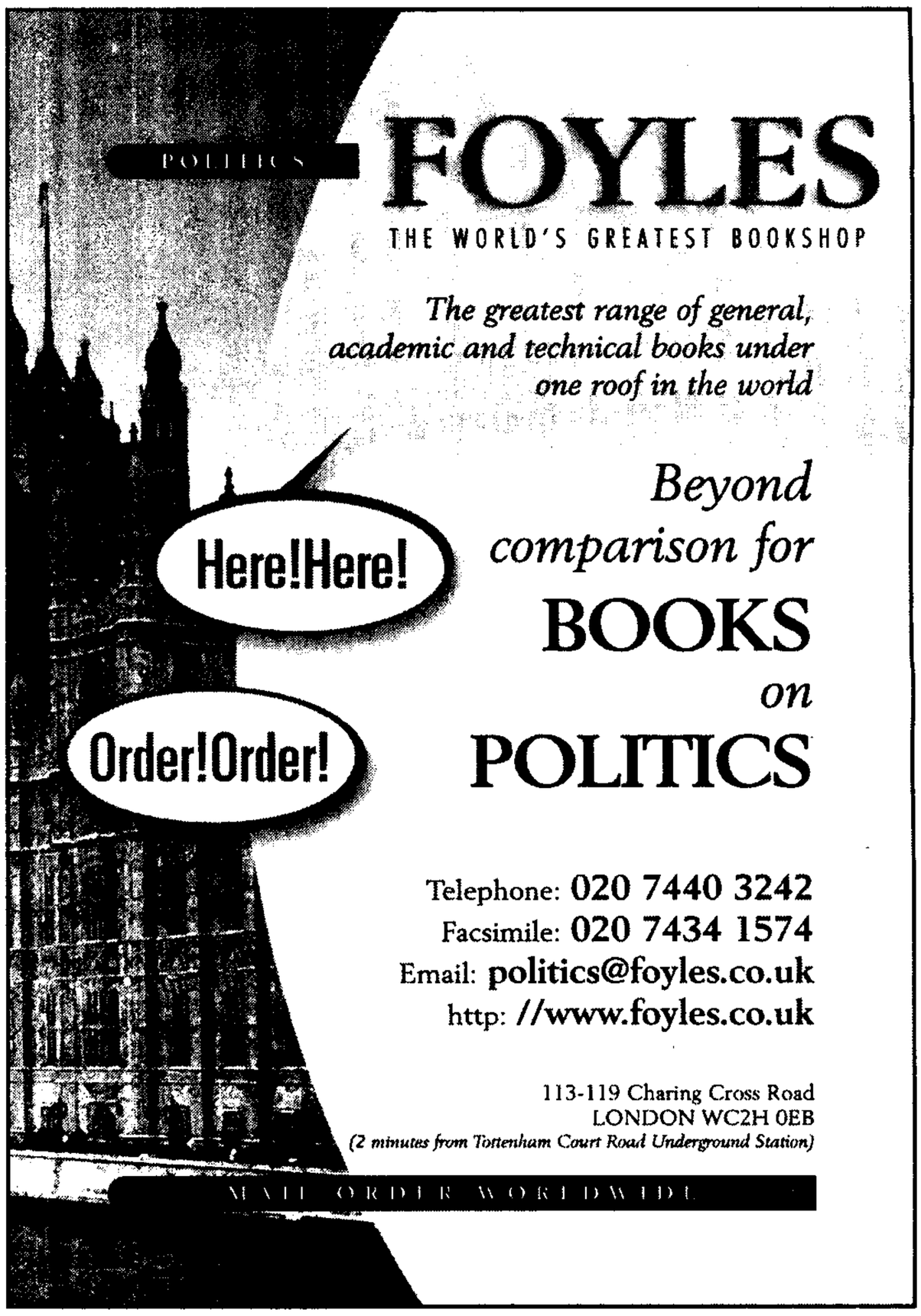

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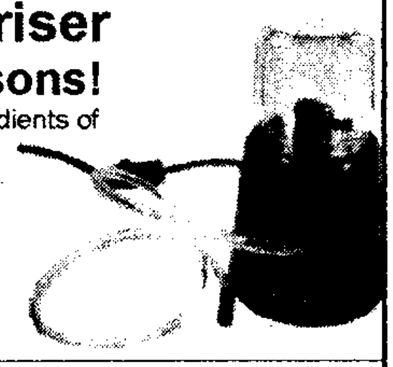

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DOMESTIC VIOLENCE SURVIVOR, mother: needs funds to help others. Barclays 20-25-85, 90957429.

PLEASE HELP THE CHILDREN'S CHARITY. THE PLACE TO BE, help thousands more primary aged school children overcome divorce, domestic violence, illness, loneliness, serious mental, physical, sexual or emotional problems. THE PLACE TO BE desperately needs £15,000 to buy a new colour photocopier to replace their 1950's steam powered model! (Remember to tell us who you are so we can say thank you!) Cheques to, THE PLACE TO BE, Wapping Telephone Exchange, Royal Mint Street, London E1 8LQ – wwww.theplace2be.org.uk

CON MAN STOLE OUR SAVINGS. Please restore our faith. Lloyds 30-62-96, 40019068.

SILLY 60-PLUS FEMALE BADLY CONNED by unscrupulous artist/charmer must move soonest. Box 1356.

GOLD STAR SCHOOL NEEDS SUGAR DADDY/MUMMY to help with sponsorship for Specialist College Status in Business and Enterprise. Help us make a difference in our local community. Pauper Head, Ged Boyle, welcomes all offers of help: Telephone Ged Boyle/Krys Dixon on 01606 75420/77500 at St Nicholas Catholic High School, Greenbank Lane, Hartford, Northwich, Cheshire. CW8 1JW.

SAVE THAI GIRL from life of prostitution Abuse – 20-17-19 70657115.

NURSE TRYING TO SAVE for 1st mortgage on NHS salary. Any help appreciated. Box 0956.

DESPERATE. Please help young man crippled by lifelong illness. Smile 089286 01400023.

HARD-WORKING, DEDICATED, passionate 29yo first-time filmmaker. Consistently side-lined by incestuous public arts funding body. In desperate need of £8,700. Assistance truly appreciated Nat West 01-08-81 Accnt. 15560376.

REMORTGAGED TO RAISE £7K for structural repairs. Now need extra £4k for dangerous Gable Wall. Sued if stop contract - too skint to raise more cash. Involuntary single mum (pre-school) so can't take on 2nd job. RBS 83-46-00 Account 00161976. buildingnightmare@hotmail.com

DROWNING – £29000 debt crippling efforts to swim for shore. Please help. HSBC 40-47-81 20228044. Thanks.

I AM WOMAN ACADEMIC who desperately needs to be funded through her PhD for the next 18 months, to cover living and childcare. Genuine. Box 1256.

ORGANIC SUPPLIER ALMOST BANKRUPT. Help me. ANY donation welcome. Nationwide Sort 07 00 30 Acc. 87305574.

WE'RE CYCLING TO BRAZIL to help raise funds for the deafblind charity Sense we need help and support from everyone and anyone. Please donate - it will be gratefully received. Contact Andy Madgwick andy.madgwick@fsnm.co.uk or 07968820616

EXCEPTIONAL Norwegian student, Chevening scholar but needs 7K to revolutionise East Asia political research in the UK. All help greatly appreciated. 95120564/560013.

DISABILITY TRUST. Young Man left disabled by two Brain operations, two Spinal operations, Visual problems, Blood disorder & Fybromyalgia. Has two young children. Please help. acc-42241418 Fleming 16-57-10.

DOMINATRIX OUTED BY MEDIA seeks tribute (circa £20,000) towards relocation to less parochial location. Sort: 300045; A/C 80008449.

PLEASE HELP. Would like to do medicine. Need £7,000. Lloyds/TSB Act. 18045860. Sort 772235.

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A few documented Dateline experiences.

a few more letters passed between us and then she phoned me" – "It was a wonderful phone call – absolutely brilliant". I can certainly say that it was the best thing I've ever done!"
A.H. Derby

when we tell people how we met, they all think it's a great idea! I just wanted to meet a kind and caring person – and I did!"
J.C. Lancs.

I actually asked Karen to marry me on the third date" – "All my friends at work said I was stupid – until they met Karen of course!!"
G.C. Suffolk

What sort of people join Dateline?

Brian *is a 53 year old Air Traffic Controller from Dorset. He enjoys dinner parties and the theatre. Brian describes himself as averagely built and attractive.*

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Anna *is a 32 year old Medical Secretary from Reading. A slim and attractive non-smoker who enjoys socialising. She likes to listen to classical and operatic music.*

Karen, *47, lives in Chichester and likes eating out and spending time with friends. She also enjoys jazz music and the countryside.*

The answer seems to be – people like you!

Names have been changed for reasons of privacy.
Membership restricted to ages 18+ only

Dateline is part of the OneSaturday plc Group of companies

Your Details

Mr ❒ Mrs ❒ Ms ❒

Surname:

First Name:

Address:

Post Code:

Tel No:

E-mail:

Marital Status:

❒ Single ❒ Divorced
❒ Widowed ❒ Separated

Age: Height:

Occupation

Religion:

Build: Attractiveness:

❒ Slight ❒ V. Attractive
❒ Medium ❒ Attractive
❒ Large ❒ Average

Your Personality

tick which traits closely describe you

❒ Affectionate ❒ Fashionable
❒ Serious ❒ Practical
❒ Considerate ❒ Conventional
❒ Shy ❒ Reliable
❒ Romantic ❒ Adventurous

Your interests

Please tick for a liking, cross for a dislike or leave blank for no pref.

❒ Wining/Dining ❒ Jazz/Folk music
❒ Pubs ❒ Classical music
❒ Sports/Keep fit ❒ Theatre/Arts
❒ Politics/History ❒ Watching TV
❒ Reading ❒ Smoking
❒ Travelling ❒ Mixing with friends
❒ Science/Tech ❒ Children
❒ Cinema ❒ Homemaking
❒ Pets/Animals ❒ Gardening
❒ Pop music ❒ Countryside

Your Attitudes

tick for yes, cross for no or leave blank if you don't feel strongly

❒ I prefer town life
❒ I involve myself in community activities
❒ I have many friends of my own sex
❒ I am interested in current affairs
❒ I am looking for one special relationship
❒ I like team activities
❒ My work makes it difficult to meet new people
❒ I want to extend my social life as well as finding a special relationship

Your Ideal Partner

Min. age: Max. age:

Height: min. max.

❒ Don't mind

Marital Status:

❒ Single ❒ Divorced
❒ Widowed ❒ Separated
❒ Don't mind

Build: Attractiveness:

❒ Slight ❒ V. Attractive
❒ Medium ❒ Attractive
❒ Large ❒ Average

How to contact us

Send in your completed questionnaire (2nd class, 27p 1st class) to:

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St Peter Port
Guernsey GY1

Or call our 24hr information line on 0871 871 8711 or you can even click through to our fully interactive website at www.dateline.co.uk

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